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Issues in Applied Linguistics

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Issues in Applied Linguistics is published twice a year by the graduate students of the Department of TESL & Applied Linguistics at UCLA. The views expressed in the journal are not necessarily those of the Editors, the Department of TESL & Applied Linguistics, or the Regents of the University of California.

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REVIEWS

Editorial

Applied Linguistics: Autonomous and Interdisciplinary

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I believe that as the scope of science broadens further and with
increasing speed, confrontations between disciplines become
more necessary than ever.

<div align="right">

Jacques Monod
From Biology to Ethics

</div>

As we race towards the end of the 20th century, drowned as
it is with the explosion of information and knowledge, we cannot
but notice that several traditional academic disciplines have had to
abandon their early pristine unidirectional goals. These shifts in
focus have happened over the decades primarily because newer
disciplines delinked from core disciplines and found autonomy so
that they could represent the inarticulate and suppressed areas of
those core disciplines with a proper voice. Yet, alongside this
development, a paradox has also occurred: several autonomous
disciplines have come together in an interdisciplinary fashion so that
these narrow specializations might avoid fragmentation of
knowledge and instead help in combining and fusing knowledge for
the benefit of all. Well known examples of this phenomenon are
computer science, cybernetics, management, and the discipline of
applied linguistics.

Applied linguistics, which Gomes de Matos (1984) traces
back to the establishment of the English Language Institute at the
University of Michigan in 1941, has over the last 30 years delinked
itself from many traditional disciplines, such as education (mainly
language teaching), linguistics (mainly structuralist) and,

psychology (mainly behaviorist) and found common ground with other disciplines, such as anthropology, biology, history, literature, psychometrics, and sociology. As a result, applied linguistics has today emerged as an autonomous as well as an interdisciplinary field of inquiry that combines and fuses knowledge from these disciplines subsequently creating new knowledge, a knowledge that traditional disciplines would not recognize as belonging to them.

A call for an autonomous as well as an interdisciplinary approach occurred early in the history of modern linguistics too, at the First Congress of Linguists in 1928. Jakobson reports that this call was crucial to linguistics for it "was a pertinent and timely program which, throughout the subsequent decades, deepened and enhanced the methods and tasks of our science" (Waugh & Monville-Burston, 1990, p. 453). A year later, Sapir also argued that linguistics should be interdisciplinary, that it

> must become increasingly concerned with the many anthropological, sociological, and psychological problems which invade the field of language as it is difficult for a modern linguist to confine himself to this traditional subject matter. Unless he is somewhat unimaginative, he cannot but share in some or all of the mutual interests which link linguistics with anthropology and the history of culture, with sociology, with psychology, with philosophy, and , more remotely, with physics and physiology. (Sapir, 1949, p. 161)

Similar dual calls for autonomy and interdisciplinarity have been issued many times in applied linguistics. From 1973, the year the Applied Linguistics section (which later, in 1977, became the American Association for Applied Linguistics) was formed as part of the Linguistic Society of America, until 1990, applied linguists have unanimously agreed upon the autonomous as well as the interdisciplinary nature of the field. Writing rather prophetically, Crystal (1981) suggested that "in the long term, this interdisciplinary approach may well lead to the development of a new discipline--a sort of applied behavior studies--in which linguistics, psychology, sociology and other relevant subjects rank equally in training" (p. 16). And it seems that applied linguistics, by all measures of judgment, has followed its interdisciplinary agenda with considerable success, thus legitimatizing its autonomy and emancipation from the traditional disciplines.

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> If you want to understand what a science is, you should look
> in the first instance not at its theories or its findings, and
> certainly not at what its apologists say about it; you should
> look at what the practitioners of it do.

<div align="right">

Clifford Geertz
The Interpretation of Cultures

</div>

Following Geertz's (1973) exhortation, a glance at the program schedule of recent international conferences on applied linguistics would show the vast range of subject matter and diverse methods of investigation used by applied linguists. A perusal of contemporary journals in the field would also show this range and diversity. From these two sources, one would also be able to gauge what the most frequently reported as well as the less frequently reported research areas are in the field.

The most frequently reported group represents domains of inquiry that are already established as belonging to applied linguistics: language education (curriculum, policy, planning, teaching, evaluation and testing), language acquisition (cognitive, cultural, neurological, psychological, social explanations for language learning), and language use in society (cultural and social contexts of language). These domains could arguably be placed within the inner circle of applied linguistics.

The less frequently reported group represents less popular domains of inquiry situated on the fringe of applied linguistics, such as the political and ideological bases of language education (e.g., Freire & Macedo, 1987; Pennycook, 1990), language and literature (e.g., Cohn, 1985; Gates, 1986), language and culture (e.g., Delpit, 1988; Locust, 1988; Ogbu, 1978), and language and cognition (e.g., Anderson, 1983; Pinker & Prince, 1989). These domains and many others in the wings awaiting wider recognition could be placed in an ever growing outer circle of range and diversity in applied linguistics.

Thus, applied linguistics has reached the stage in its evolution when it is clearly both autonomous as well as interdisciplinary. Perhaps what is needed now is a conceptual map in order to make sense of the field's expanding interdisciplinary nature so that its future can be charted sufficiently well for and by its professionals and students.

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Fifteen years ago, applied linguists were debating the definition, redefinition, and scope of applied linguistics. Several important events to discuss these concerns were held, but the most influential one was convened in Miami at the TESOL Convention in April, 1977 where twelve professionals participated in a roundtable discussion on the "Scope of Applied Linguistics." In a subsequent publication, Kaplan (1980) collected eighteen brief articles on the same topic, many by participants at the 1977 roundtable discussion. Kaplan (1980) summarizes the contributions in his introduction:

> What seems clear from these papers is that applied linguistics is not merely the application of linguistics (that is, of linguistic theory) . . . applied linguistics, whatever it is, is a field in its own right, a discipline with an independent body of knowledge, one with an evolving body of knowledge, one with an evolving methodology of its own, and thus one that needs a theory of its own. (p. viii)

As one of the journals and recorders of our field's contemporary development, *Issues in Applied Linguistics* leads off in this second issue with its own Roundtable about the definition, scope, and purpose of applied linguistics, about its relationship to other fields, and its future. Fourteen responses to our call for contributions were received from Europe, and North and South America, from students and faculty, men and women, applied linguists and interested others. The views expressed are almost as diverse as the fields the respondents represent, but a certain unity among the responses indicates that the field is more autonomous and interdisciplinary today than ever before.

The three main articles that follow are reports of research conducted by graduate students[1] in the university classroom setting. As is often the case with graduate student research, the studies were carried out with small samples in particular contexts, but they are nevertheless of general interest due to their original, carefully thought out and executed research designs. In addition, they might be said to represent the kind of necessary subaltern research which can offer fresh insights and perspectives to established professors of the field from angles that may have been overlooked or less attended to until now.

The first article, by Rachel Locker, on two perspectives of the accuracy of transliterated messages produced by three sign

language interpreters for deaf students, is an excellent example of this sort of research. Locker's work in an area generally underrepresented in research and publication certainly expands the boundaries of applied linguistics from the "unsung melodies" and "polyphonic voices" in the field I invoked in my last editorial to include unhearing and unspeaking language users. Her report places the author's work among the slim but growing area of applied linguistics research for the deaf community.

Anne Lazaraton and Heidi Riggenbach report on the development, implementation, and evaluation of a semi-direct test of oral proficiency called the Rhetorical Task Examination. One of the unique features of the Rhetorical Task Examination is that it is based on the rhetorical modes actually covered in university-level ESL course work. The authors' discussion of the measurement characteristics, practicality, reliability, and validity of the test places the Rhetorical Task Examination among the growing list of instruments available for semi-direct oral proficiency testing.

Juan Carlos Gallego's article reports the results of a study on the intelligibility of nonnative English-speaking teaching assistants in the university setting, a topic which has been at the center of several educational and legislative debates of late. Gallego's empirical investigation offers a novel method of examining intelligibility: through feedback both from undergraduates who are native speakers of English and from a group of ESL specialists. His study also confirms previous work on students' perceptions of the language problems of international teaching assistants.

In the exchange section, we are pleased to present our first response to an article published in a previous issue. Barry Kanpol, from the allied field of sociology of education, replies to Alastair Pennycook's article which called for a critical applied linguistics for the 1990s. Kanpol concurs with Pennycook's exhortation that a political applied linguistics should have a postmodern agenda, but he urges us not to lose sight of the similarities we share within our differences.

In the review section, which is considerably longer this time, seven reviews examine recent books in the context of relevant issues in applied linguistics. Once again, a wide range of areas are represented: content-based second language instruction (John Clegg), systemic linguistics (Agnes Weiyun He), cross-cultural learning (Perias Sithambaram), qualitative research (Brian Lynch), cross-cultural reading/writing (Christine Holten and Carol Ann

Linn), TOEFL preparation (Sara Cushing), and international teaching assistants (Janet Goodwin and Juan Carlos Gallego).

To return to this issue's main theme, we might say, in closing, as Monod (1967) states, that applied linguistics can be viewed as the product of a growing intellectual trend in the late 20th century: the creation of disciplines in which there is not much room for parochialism, separatism, or isolationism. Indeed, we may all need to be interdisciplinary so that our endeavors are meaningful and useful to more than just us.

December 1990   Antony John Kunnan

Notes

[1]Heidi Riggenbach, Assistant Professor at the University of Washington, was a graduate student at UCLA when her study with Anne Lazaraton was conducted.

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SPECIAL FEATURE ROUNDTABLE

Defining Our Field: Unity in Diversity

Six months ago, in our inaugural issue, **Issues in Applied** **Linguistics** *called for responses from our readers to two questions:*
> **What is applied linguistics?**
> **What should applied linguistics be?**

We were motivated to pose these fundamental questions as founders of a new journal in an emerging field, whose own graduate program in applied linguistics was in the process of becoming an independent department. This transition has raised important issues concerning our academic identity and research agenda for the future, not only for ourselves but for the larger academic community with whom we interact and exchange expertise.

Fourteen replies[1] were received in response to our questions from graduate students and researchers in the U.S. and from as far away as Brasil, Finland, Romania, and Israel. In addition to geographical diversity, the respondents represent various departmental affiliations, including sociology, Germanic languages, English, health services, linguistics, psycholinguistics, brain research, and applied linguistics. Moreover, the views expressed in the contributions not only reflect different ways of approaching the questions, they embody many of the current emphases encompassed by our interdisciplinary field.

IAL would like to thank all the contributors for helping make this Roundtable possible.

INTRODUCTION

Historically, applied linguistics has been viewed as the application of linguistic theory to the solving of practical problems in the world, though for many it has, and continues to be, associated with the teaching of modern languages. Although Gomes de Matos (1984) traces the history of applied linguistics from the establishment of the English Language Institute at the University of Michigan in 1941, the First International Colloquium of Applied Linguistics, sponsored by the International Association of Applied Linguistics (AILA), in Nancy, France (1964), dealt with a number of areas of concern, including language teaching and automation in

linguistics (Gomes de Matos, 1984). That applied linguistics is not synonymous with language teaching, nor, for that matter, that language teaching is not informed by linguistic knowledge alone, was insightfully noted by Pit Corder (1975):

> [A]pplied linguistics in its broadest sense is concerned with many activities apart from language teaching, and . . . language teaching involves the application of knowledge derived from many theoretical studies apart from linguistics. (p. 5)

In the almost thirty years that have elapsed since the first AILA conference, regional and national AILA affiliates have been established all over the world, and the number of research areas included in AILA's conferences has increased exponentially. Indeed, departments of applied linguistics, themselves recently established, are awarding M.A. and Ph.D. degrees for work ranging from cognitive science and language acquisition to discourse analysis and language planning, among other areas of inquiry. Furthermore, applied linguistics has become the central focus of more and more journals, including this one, rather than merely a secondary concern of journals devoted to the general study of language. Today, there are those who would argue that applied linguistics has "emerged as an interdisciplinary field of inquiry with its own authority and rhetoric" (Kunnan, 1990, p. 2).

Perhaps because of this history, it is no easy matter to obtain consensus on the answers to the questions we posed, even among professionals in linguistic and applied linguistic research. As we will show, of our fourteen respondents, some continue to equate applied linguistics with language teaching or see applied linguistics, to varying degrees, as the practical embodiment of linguistic theory. But other contributors recognize the broad interdisciplinary nature of applied linguistics and the socio-political concerns which the study of language in its real-world cultural contexts entails.   Two respondents even suggest that applied linguistics may not be truly 'applied,' and one contributor redefines who an 'applied linguist' might be.

THE RESPONSES

I.   Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics

Our first contributor, Robert Stockwell, distinguishes between the application of linguistic knowledge to a wide range of disciplines, whose methodologies place them outside of linguistics proper, and the term "applied linguistics" which, in his view, is not a field comprising all of these disciplines.   Rather, he suggests that "applied linguistics" is largely a term coined by the more innovative practitioners of modern language teaching.   While our first contributor recognizes that linguistic knowledge can be applied to many areas, he locates the work of applied linguists in but a limited subset of these applications.

Robert P. Stockwell, *Department of Linguistics, UCLA*
To answer the question "What is applied linguistics," it would be useful first to answer the question "What is linguistics?"   I take *general* linguistics to be the search for and characterization of language universals. Language universals come in all colors and denominations: social (both large group and small group interaction), psychological, neurological. The decision whether a given kind of study is properly within the field of linguistics may depend on the methodology: if the methodology involves, for example, excitation of brain neurons, the results may have bearing on our search for and comprehension of language universals, but the methodology is within another discipline (neurology and neurosurgery).   The excitation itself may be guided by linguistic information (e.g., whether certain kinds of linguistic performance are inhibited), and *that* would be an instance of applied linguistics--which I understand to be taking linguistic knowledge and using it in another discipline.   Similarly, much of what is done with computers to simulate language behavior is not itself linguistics, but an application of linguistics, both in the sense that success is measured by linguistic verisimilitude and in the sense that a linguistic theory of some sort is built into the initial structure of the program that performs the simulation.

One can readily imagine huge numbers of applications of linguistic knowledge.   It is impossible for me to see how to assimilate them all into a coherent field called "applied linguistics."   I *believe*, but am subject to correction if someone can show me a better historiographic account, that "applied linguistics" is a term that came to be used to characterize the work of departments which started out trying to do a more sophisticated job of language teaching than, as they saw it, typically had been done in modern foreign language departments.   It has an aura of respectability that is lacking in the acronym TESL, and besides, many applied linguists, even those in TESL programs, work on languages other than English.   Into these programs there

sometimes have come psychologists, neurologists, and others who, in honest efforts to define a broader range of applications of linguistics within an ill-defined discipline, muddied the waters even further. I think that there is no definable field of "applied linguistics" in the sense that there *is* a definable field of linguistics, psychology, physics, etc., though I believe the range of useful applications of linguistics includes many that applied linguists have dealt with as well as a great deal that they have not gotten into because they lack the specific knowledge of some other discipline in which it makes sense for linguistics to have applications.

II. Relationships Between Applied Linguistics and Linguistics

The next five contributions define applied linguistics in relation to linguistics, but not in similar ways. The first, by Robert Kirsner, much like the previous contribution, views the rise of a field known as "applied linguistics" as having come about due to a division of labor in particular academic settings, although, in his view, the domain of applied linguistics is thus legitimized by its unique directions of inquiry. The second contribution, from Roger Andersen, distinguishes between two co-exisiting kinds of applied linguistics: one applying linguistic knowledge, the other being what the members of the field of applied linguistics say they do. The third contribution, by Tatiana Slama-Cazacu, conceives of "applied linguistics" and "fundamental linguistic research" as two distinct "branches" of linguistics, differing in aims but enriching one another. The fourth contribution, submitted by the Faculty Committee of UCLA's Department of TESL & Applied Linguistics, maintains that although linguistics is not the only field which influences applied linguistics research, applied linguistics nevertheless has its own unique agenda of investigative questions, methods, and applications for studying language learning and use. Finally, in the fifth contribution, John Schumann rejects any special dependence of applied linguistics on linguistics and, much like in the third and fourth contributions, acknowledges the multidisciplinary insights which inform applied linguistics inquiry.

Robert S. Kirsner, *Department of Germanic Languages, UCLA*
        The difference between linguistics and applied linguistics is like the difference between a language and a dialect. As we all know, a "language" is merely a dialect with a navy or an airforce. The difference between language and dialect cannot really be defined in structural terms; it is purely political. Similarly, the difference between linguistics and applied linguistics is (almost)

purely political. To be sure, some research topics, such as basic grammatical theory or phonetics, traditionally belong to "pure" linguistics, and some, such as the methodology of language teaching, traditionally belong to applied linguistics. But other areas can be divided up either way. First language acquisition can go to a linguistics department, a psychology department, or to an applied linguistics department. I believe that second language acquisition--which is about as much "applied linguistics" as one can get--is also a rubric at conferences of the Linguistic Society of America, so even that can belong to "linguistics proper." At a certain point, drawing the boundary between linguistics and applied linguistics is like asking the difference between chemical physics and physical chemistry. It becomes a sociological or political decision, a matter of whether a particular university administration is going to support financially the development and maintenance of an additional entity which wants to look at all those areas of language which are not--for whatever reason-- adequately dealt with within its linguistics department. An example of what I mean is the difference between the way certain kinds of linguistic research are done at UCLA and at UC Santa Barbara. At UCLA most discourse work is done in applied linguistics, while at UCSB it is done in linguistics proper.

Looking to the future, I would like to see a vigorous applied linguistics that is willing to call attention to and study *all* the things that are neglected by theoretical linguistics including, but not limited to, the use of statistical techniques for language research, the process of writing, and the meaning of grammatical constructions as they are used in texts.

Roger Andersen, *Department of TESL & Applied Linguistics, UCLA*

"Applied linguistics" is at least two very different things. First of all, it is simply what we do. And "we" means all of us in the world who refer to ourselves as applied linguists and our discipline as applied linguistics, as circular as this may seem. This sense of applied linguistics refers primarily to people at "higher" levels of a pecking order which has language teachers at the bottom. Although I think this term is inappropriate to refer to the discipline practiced by those people at the top of this language teaching pyramid, it is nevertheless beyond our control that through decades of use of the term by *the people who consider themselves applied linguists* the term has come to be accepted as the only universally recognized term for this field and the people who inhabit it.

The other life of "applied linguistics" is the sum of the two words "applied" and "linguistics." That is, linguists who apply their skill and knowledge to a real world problem or concern. Examples of such applied linguists include a speech therapist trained originally as a linguist, a technical editor with a linguistics degree, and a linguist who directs a program to certify elementary school teachers to teach literacy and language arts in the children's vernacular.

There is room in this world for both types of applied linguists. Applied linguists of the type we think we are rely on linguistics to varying degrees but do not necessarily have to be total linguists. The other kind, total

linguists who then apply their skill and knowledge to a practical problem or concern, *must* be linguists first and foremost before they apply linguistics. My own preference is to be sure that students in applied linguistics have as solid a training in linguistics as is possible, but just what brand of linguistics they need and how much is debatable. We need to get rid of the tension caused by the difference in the academic training of the two types of applied linguists and accept the diversity and adversity that accompanies it. Enough of defining ourselves. Let's just work and prove with our work what we are and what we do.

Tatiana Slama-Cazacu, *Department of Philology, University of Bucharest*
        In order to define applied linguistics and judiciously integrate it into a system of sciences, we reject artificial correlations or subordinations and select as a criterion the *aim* of various types of linguistic research. Applied linguistics is that field which studies language with a definite aim of application, i.e., which serves *directly* and *specifically* the achievement of a particular practical objective. Within linguistics, there is a directly applied "branch" with some theoretical foundation and a "branch" that has a *predominantly* theoretical or fundamental character. It is hard to find a suitable name for the latter. Erroneously it is called "general," "theoretical," or (completely wrongly) "pure." Though unusual, it would be more correct to call it "fundamental linguistic research," since it has as its aim the extraction of certain general or theoretical principles to describe aspects of particular languages or of the phenomenon "language" in general. But this does not mean that applied linguistics is separate from "linguistics" or that applied linguistics means "applications of linguistics." As the figure below illustrates, the two great categories of language study--different in their *immediate aims*--are correlative, closely connected (Slama-Cazacu, 1973, 1980, 1984), and even mutually influence one another. Applied linguistic research serves the fundamental study of the language, and the fundamental study of language is a necessary prerequisite for applied linguistics.
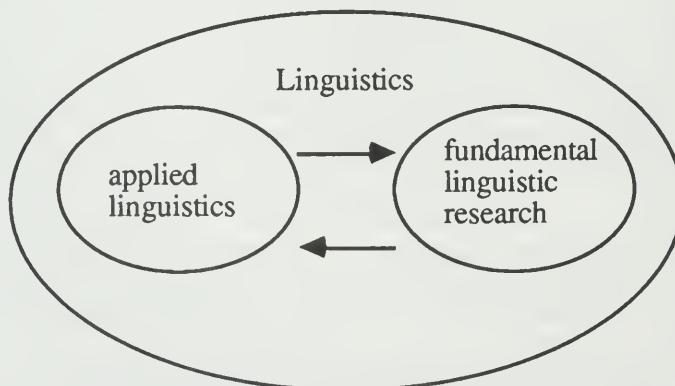
What should applied linguistics be? To answer this question we must begin with an appropriate conception of what "language" is. I have argued elsewhere (Slama-Cazacu, 1973, 1980, 1982, 1983, 1984) that since "language" is a *human* phenomenon, bearing the mark of human peculiarities and functioning in real-life settings, it cannot be analyzed exclusively as an abstract system, detached from the contingencies of human reality. If this conception of "language" is our starting point, then not only is it natural that everything which is inside *linguistics*, and which thus refers to isomorphic facts, should be imbued with similar peculiarities, but a methodological procedure should also be used which respects the specific features of language that are similar whether our investigative aim is "applied" or "fundamental." If in fundamental linguistic research some other model of "language" is employed which is different from the one used in applied linguistics, distortions will occur in any extrapolations from one field to the other, to the detriment and inefficiency of both fields. Moreover, given a real-life conception of language, it is a major error for applied linguistics to attempt to solve practical problems exclusively by linguistic means or especially by means of a linguistics which considers "language" to be an abstract phenomenon.

But while in applied linguistics it is more obvious that "language" should be viewed as a *concrete* phenomenon in *concrete* life settings, research of a general character is also required within applied linguistics itself. A *theory of applied linguistics* should specify for example, the general principles of learning a particular foreign language on a contrastive basis. Any real applications, however, can neither be made outside of a particular context nor be limited to applying only *linguistic* knowledge. "Language teaching," for instance, is achieved in a broad educational context that only partially coincides with linguistics. The situation of applied linguistics in the system of the sciences is thus that of a *multidisciplinary* field, which uses linguistic data yet must also incorporate data and methods from other disciplines, blending them into a whole.

Faculty Committee,[2] *Department of TESL & Applied Linguistics, UCLA*

Applied Linguistics is not merely linguistics applied. It can be characterized as having a central concern for language learning and use. To this concern we apply insights from linguistics, education, psychology, sociology, neuroscience, artificial intelligence and other relevant disciplines. It is also a field that can be characterized by the types of basic research questions that are addressed, by the diversity of its research methods, and by the range of applications of basic research to real world contexts. These three domains of applied linguistics are interdependent in that researchers addressing themselves to the more practical issues and questions do the best work when they are well informed of the related basic research and the relevant research tools. Likewise, those doing the more basic research have the greatest impact when they are alert to the potential applications of their work.

John Schumann, *Department of TESL & Applied Linguistics, UCLA*

Applied linguistics is a central concern for language acquisition and use. In order to speak to that concern, insights are applied from psychology, neuroscience, sociology, education, anthropology, linguistics and philosophy. Applied linguistics is not linguistics applied, and linguistics enjoys no special status in this field.

III. The Multidisciplinarity of Applied Linguistics

Taking the interdisciplinarity of applied linguistics even further, the two contributions that follow see an enormously wide range of fields which both inform and benefit from the work of applied linguists. The first contribution, by Bob Jacobs, rejects the limiting association of applied linguistics with TESL and language teaching in favor of an applied linguistics which brings the findings of other disciplines to bear on various language issues and which, in turn, contributes to the knowledge of other fields. In a similar vein, the second contribution, by Minna Ilomaki, Tarja Miettinen, and Reija Virrankoski, recognizes the many skills and types of knowledge an applied linguist needs to begin dealing with the problems inherent in international and intercultural communication, including insights from mass media, journalism, and communication studies.

Bob Jacobs, *Department of TESL & Applied Linguistics and Brain Research Institute, UCLA*

Applied linguistics is traditionally seen as the application of linguistics to teaching, as demonstrated by the closeness with which TESL is associated with applied linguistics. This view is outmoded and provides the greatest limitation to the field. Instead, applied linguistics should be seen as the application of various disciplines (e.g., neurobiology, cognitive neuroscience, psychology, sociology) to various language issues, such as language acquisition, language use, language policy. Such a perspective allows not only for rich interdisciplinary integration, but may also permit applied linguistics researchers to make contributions to other fields of inquiry.

Minna Ilomaki, Tarja Miettinen, and Reija Virrankoski, *Department of Applied Linguistics, University of Vaasa*

In light of today's European integration and internationalization, a multidisciplinary undertaking of applied linguistics, including communication studies and journalism, is needed. Students of languages, communication studies, and applied linguistics are all needed as experts in jobs that require a special knowledge of languages and of the communication problems between

cultures. The science of applied linguistics thus does not merely study the questions of linguistics in general, it also addresses the societal and cultural terms and associations of a generation, the dissemination and use of knowledge, issues of information dissemination, the possible problems arising during the communication process, the problems caused during the processing of information, the problems of bilingual processing, special languages, computer linguistics, the relationship of language and sex, and how many of these problems may in some degree be a consequence of cultural misunderstanding. Applied linguistics also deals with solving the problems of teaching languages and teaching the dissemination of information.

For applied linguistics to solve such problems, knowledge of more than just one scientific field is clearly needed, and thus a person working in the area of applied linguistics must take advantage of any theories and scientific models from fields such as sociology, psychology, anthropology, philosophy, and applied mathematics which can help in the solutions of these problems. In this sense, applied linguistics is a necessarily eclectic field of inquiry.

IV. Sociopolitical Views of Applied Linguistics

The next three contributors see applied linguistics as having an even more pronounced sociopolitical agenda than the previous contribution. The first contributor, Helen George, recognizes a strong bond between linguistics and applied linguistics, but views applied linguistics as the most coherent domain for the interdisciplinary research needed to study language loss and maintenance among the linguistic minorities who must preserve their cultural identities while trying to integrate into mainstream education. The second contributor, Catherine Pettinari, sees applied linguistics, with its focus on real-world oral and written language, as the medium through which the communication problems between "competing discourses," especially in the work place and in the web of social services, can be solved. The third contributor, Francisco Gomes de Matos, calls for applied linguistics to reduce its dependence on linguistics and set as its mission the empowerment of all "linguistically and culturally undervalued and exploited" human beings and the enhancement of "communicative peace" at all levels of society.

Helen George, *Department of TESL & Applied Linguistics, UCLA*

Because applied linguistics uses several different disciplines to describe and analyze language, it has a multi-dimensional nature that is difficult to define in one single all-encompassing statement. Applied linguistics, as an interdisciplinary study founded in linguistics, emanates from a core of

fundamental linguistic concepts and branches out into different areas of study. Linguistics provides the terminology and basic frame of reference which applied linguistics uses to varying extents to develop other perspectives on language. This makes it possible to examine language not just in terms of its structure but also in terms of other aspects such as cognitive processing, sociology of language, language planning, cross-cultural communication, and language teaching. Strands of interest radiate in different directions to weave together notions and concepts in varying patterns to create an understanding of language and its use. Since language is the focus, no matter how the research is designed, the speakers of the language are the crucial element, for at the center of the linguistic core stand the human users and producers of the language. Without the speakers, there is no language.

For Navajo speakers, language is not just a conceptual tool for communication but a spiritual gift to designate a people's unique existence. The concatenation of sounds create physical symbols for deriving meaning and forming concepts to establish the existence of things, including one's own existence. Language is powerful. It is Life, itself. Yet, because of language loss today, the existence of the Diné (Navajo) is being threatened. Over the past 125 years, the Navajo people have had to deal with a stream of disruptive cultural changes. The ensuing disorder in their traditional society is forcing Navajos to redefine existence and survival in a modern technological world. One critical facet of that endeavor is language survival.

That is where applied linguistics appears as the relevant discipline for research, because it provides a medium for understanding and describing people and language. The linguistics core allows the researcher to describe the structure of the language; ideas from education provide the tools for language teaching and curriculum development; and identified components in language planning provide the framework for planning native language maintenance and teaching academic English in the school systems. Thus, the diversified nature of applied linguistics makes it possible to account for the complexity of language while also providing practical application for social language needs.

Catherine Pettinari, *Institute of Maternal and Child Health, Wayne State University*

Applied linguistics has too often been recognized as related to the language teaching enterprise in one way or another. It is interesting that, although there are a "multiplicity of the tools in language and of the ways they are used" (Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 13), applied linguistics has defined itself as primarily related to language teaching and learning. Yet, in thinking about the problems of modern society, many applied linguists easily see them as language and/or text problems or as problems which can be observed, diagnosed, and solved through conversation and/or text. A problem for health care providers, for example, is how to obtain information in a limited time period from women who "touch the system" only briefly and who have little motivation (often justified) to provide information which may be crucial to their future health. A problem for those dealing with policy-makers is how to frame their requests--or

construct a narrative--in ways to ensure effective results. The challenge to applied linguistics in real-life situations is thus to develop ways of systematically and relevantly confronting language and communication problems with the many analytical tools we have to explore the features of oral and written language, as well as to construct solutions with those who must live and work with "competing discourses" (Weedon, 1987) on a daily basis. A new applied linguistics in the workplace must put these issues into prominent focus.

Francisco Gomes de Matos, *Departamento de Letras, Universidade Federal de Pernambuco*
What is applied linguistics? Applied linguistics is an interdisciplinarily-oriented domain, still too narrowly based and dependent on linguistics, aimed at a deeper understanding of human linguistic interactions in varied contexts and at exploring ways for helping improve the quality of human communicative growth and development. When I stress the *still strong dependency on linguistics,* that is my perception of the field as universally (and also locally) practiced. A more broadly-based field could become a broadly-practiced activity.

What should applied linguistics be? I'd rather use *could* than *should,* so as to avoid a possible reading of something *imposed, dogmatic, thought to be/expected to be*, quite typical of Western educational traditions. Applied linguistics could become a field committed and dedicated to an in-depth, open-ended, permanent, universal (rather than predominantly Anglo-American or European-centered) search for an interdisciplinary understanding and/or solution of individual and collective communicative problems in the acquisition, learning, teaching, and uses of languages by human beings in varied and variable contexts. Such a field would be the outcome of integrated insights, principles, and research findings of arts and sciences and other types of human creations related to or with a realistic interest in language and languages. Another crucial mission for applied linguists could be that of helping to contribute to a more critical, comprehensive preparation of applied linguists as new constructors and transformers of sociocultural, political realities through the means of linguistic expression and communication. That so many human beings are being linguistically and culturally undervalued and exploited also merits a high priority attention by applied linguists.

Doing applied linguistics thus calls first and foremost for a strong determination to be at the service of fellow human beings (learners, literates-to-be, persons having speech or reading/writing disorders, language minority students, etc.) so as to help them as language acquirers, learners, and users, and especially to enhance a much needed communicative peace at the individual, community, and international levels.

V. Philosophical Views of Applied Linguistics

A different point of departure is taken by the following two contributors who explore to what extent applied linguistics can be classified as an "applied" field of inquiry. The first, Elinor Ochs, suggests that since applied disciplines can eventually generate theoretical insights, applied linguistics may be evolving into a more theoretical interdisciplinary field whose methods and explanations are challenging existing hypotheses from more isolated and idealized approaches to language. The second contributor, Joel Walters, compares applied linguistics to Aristotelian notions of theoretical, productive, and practical science and concludes that most of the subfields of applied linguistic inquiry are not classifiable as productive or practical science.

Elinor Ochs, *Department of TESL and Applied Linguistics, UCLA*

In all disciplines, intellectual activity revolves around articulation of central problems and proposed resolutions or accounts. In applied fields, the central problems tend to involve objects situated in the everyday world, and the procedures for resolving problems tend to be drawn from some particular field or fields of inquiry. The history of modern scholarship is one in which applied fields have developed such fascinating insights that they have become independent theoretical fields in their own right. Thus applied mathematics has developed into the fields of physics, biology, engineering, economy, computer science, and linguistics among others. One way of looking at this is to say that one field's application (e.g., mathematics) is another field's theory (e.g., linguistics). Another way of looking at this is to say that theories evolve out of application. Within this perspective, applications may challenge existing hypotheses and necessitate novel ways of understanding nature.

What then of applied linguistics? Parallel to the course of events just outlined, applied linguistics is rapidly evolving into a yet unnamed field. Its synthetic application of linguistics, anthropology, sociology, psychology, and neurobiology to the study of language-related problems in the world 1) reveals the inadequacies of any one field to handle the complexities of situated language problems, 2) promotes fresh ways of proceeding with data, and 3) produces new explanations of language use, language acquisition, and language change that challenge more reductionist approaches to language.

Joel Walters, *Department of English, Bar-Ilan University*

In rejecting the Platonic view of a unified, inseparable Science, Aristotle became the founder of the tradition separating Science into branches on the basis of subject matter. In the *Metaphysics* (Book I) (Aristotle/McKeon, 1970), he distinguishes among theoretical, productive, and practical science (see

also Aristotle's *Foundations of Scientific Thought*/Gershenson & Greenberg, 1963). Theology, physical science, and mathematics are specified as the three branches of theoretical science. Productive science is considered art, craft, or technique; its object is that a product "should be of a certain character" (Aristotle/Joachim, 1955, p.12). Practical science is like a prescription for behavior, its focus centered on acting and action, in particular, "doing things in a certain way" (Aristotle/Joachim, 1955, p.12). For Aristotle aesthetics is productive, while ethics is practical. Modern philosophy, in contrast, treats these fields as theoretical in the fullest sense of the term (Aristotle/Joachim, 1955). Similarly, studies in language acquisition (first or second), stylistics, language variation, brain-language relations, reading, composition, etc. all conform to Aristotle's speculative, explanation-seeking, contemplative criteria for theoretical science. Each of these branches of linguistics delineates a domain for study; each is interested in causes and/or properties of a phenomenon; and each, to a greater or lesser extent, uses principles (Gr.: *archai*) to draw conclusions (Randall, 1960).

Given these criteria and distinctions, only the language teaching branch of applied linguistics qualifies as productive or practical. Teaching methodologies, materials development, and test construction are crafts or techniques not unlike medicine and engineering. Once they are subject to examination, however (e.g., for their linguistic or cognitive bases), they leave the realm of the practical/productive. This is not to say that they pass automatically into the domain of theoretical science. Aristotle defines science as "demonstration from true principles," which involves identification and dialectical examination of those principles, collection of data (by a methodology which emerges from the subject matter), and, finally, explanation of the phenomenon (Randall, 1960, pp. 48-58). Thus, following Jarvie's (1986) argument that "applied science . . . is far more like pure science than it is like invention," it is suggested here that applied linguistics may be more theoretical than applied.

VI. (Re)analyzing Applied Linguistics

Our final contributor, Emanuel Schegloff, proposes a definition of applied linguistics which is radically different from the other contributions since it includes a consideration which we did not raise: Who is an applied linguist? This approach effectively deconstructs our original exercise and forces all of us to reconsider what it is we do.

Emanuel A. Schegloff, *Department of Sociology, UCLA*

In one common view, there are things called "languages" and, across their variation, a faculty (in a now almost archaic sense of that word) for language *per se*, or Language with a capital "L." It is composed of some sort of grasp or *knowledge*, in the abstract, of the various elements of Language and the

particular realization of those elements for particular languages. Professional students of Language, and of particular languages as embodiments of this view, are Linguists, and their discipline--Linguistics--has as its central undertaking the formulation of an account of the knowledge which *defines* a language, or Language.

In this view, "applied linguistics," if it exists at all, is concerned with the application of linguistics to practical problems, such as helping people to learn languages, to overcome problems in speaking or understanding, or to adapt language for specialized uses. "Applied linguists" (in this view) are professionals who "apply" what is known (by Linguistics) about Language to these specific settings or undertakings. Applied linguistics, then, is the application by one group of professionals of the knowledge developed about Language/language by another group of professionals.

Might we explore another version, or vision? If there is something like the Linguist's notion of a principled or abstract grasp of Language, its first-order graspers are its practitioners, that is, those who *employ it* in the first instance (rather than those who are *employed to study it*). If there is a "faculty" for language, then it is not in universities, but in *practitioners*, that is, those who practice. By "practicing" I mean here exercising a knowledge-based skill, as in "practicing medicine," rather than upgrading or maintaining one's skill, as in "practicing the piano." In this sense, "applied linguists" refers to the ordinary users of a language, the ordinary members of a society or culture who, in the first instance, have knowledge of (the) Language and who apply that knowledge to do the things they ordinarily (or extraordinarily) do with it. Every moment and act of talking, hearing, writing, reading, etc. are moments in which the resources of language are applied to some practical activity. Virtually everyone is, then, an "applied linguist."

What then is applied linguistics? Perhaps it is the study of what applied linguists do, and how they do it. *Applied linguistics* might then, in a peculiar twist with a double sense, be better termed *the study of applied linguistics*.

CONCLUSION

Many of the responses to our Roundtable suggest that "applied linguistics" may not be the most appropriate name for our field, burdened as it is with associations and expectations which derive more from its past than its future. For the present, as a number of contributors maintain, the field of applied linguistics has become a nexus for knowledge which heretofore was isolated in separate domains of inquiry but which inevitably had to come together if the complexities of human language and interaction were ever to be understood. To be applied linguists necessarily demands, therefore, that we develop expertise in more than one subfield of the

study of language.   In addition, as several contributions have stressed, this interdisciplinary imperative challenges us to translate our interest in real-world language into an agenda for understanding and solving real-world sociopolitical problems. The responses to this Roundtable reflect, in various ways, an awareness of one or both of these important concerns. The identity of our field may lie, therefore, not only in agreeing to be unified in our diversity but also in realizing what our unified diversity can contribute to the world.

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Notes

[1]Some of the contributions have been shortened and edited due to space constraints.

[2]Marianne Celce-Murcia kindly provided us with a copy of the definition of applied linguistics as stated in the official departmental review (1990).   The faculty members who authored this joint statement were Roger Andersen, Lyle Bachman, Donna Brinton, Russ Campbell, Marianne Celce-Murcia, Brian Lynch, and John Schumann.

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Lexical Equivalence in Transliterating for Deaf Students in the University Classroom: Two Perspectives

Rachel Locker
University of California, Los Angeles

This study examines the accuracy of transliterated messages produced by sign language interpreters in university classrooms. Causes of interpreter errors fell into three main categories: misperception of the source message, lack of recognition of source forms, and failure to identify a target language equivalent. Most errors were found to be in the third category, a finding which raises questions not only about the preparation these interpreters received for tertiary settings, but more generally about their knowledge of semantic aspects of the American Sign Language (ASL) lexicon. Deaf consumers' perceptions of problems with transliteration in the classroom and their strategies for accommodating various kinds of interpreter error were also elicited and are discussed. In support of earlier research, this study's finding that transliteration may not be the most effective means of conveying equivalent information to deaf students in the university classroom raises questions about the adequacy of interpreters' preparation for this task.

INTRODUCTION

Since the passage of federal legislation--the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504--mandating accessibility to federally funded facilities, an increasing number of deaf students have entered programs of study in tertiary institutions. Sign language interpreters have been the primary resource for making university classrooms accessible to them by providing simultaneous signed interpretation. This service usually takes the form of "transliteration," a part-English, part-ASL form of translation (see detailed definition below). But while a great deal of interpreter training and service provision has taken place over the last fifteen years, relatively little empirical research into the results and ramifications of what happens in the classroom with interpreters has been undertaken. This study is

a small-scale descriptive investigation of the effectiveness of sign language interpreting as found in the university classroom, examined from two perspectives.

The first section of the study entails a pilot analysis of lexical choices made by sign language interpreters transliterating from spoken English to a signed form. Given that ASL and English are two distinct languages, the semantic range of an English word and ASL sign holding the same dictionary gloss is often different, (Colonomos, 1984). Lexical choice can therefore be problematic for an interpreter attempting to achieve message equivalence in a "word-for-word" transliterated form. The second, complementary section of this study is a survey of three deaf university students' perceptions and responses to interpreting error. The information gleaned from both these sources may be useful for emphasizing the need for study of semantic equivalence between languages in the professional preparation of sign language interpreters, and for raising questions about the viability of "transliteration" as a means of conveying equivalent information to deaf consumers.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions of basic terms are presented to orient the reader to the field of sign language interpreting:

American Sign Language (ASL) is a complete and independent language, with complex systems of phonology, syntax, and semantics (Bellugi & Klima, 1980). Furthermore, ASL expresses/creates a specific system of cultural meanings shared by the American deaf community, in the same way that Russian or Japanese embodies the conceptual universe of these cultures. It is important to stress, therefore, that any discussion of interpreting or transliteration must assume the interaction of two languages, not simply a coding operation from one modality to another.

Transliteration is broadly defined for this study as changing a spoken English message into a manual form (using the vocabulary of ASL) in order to represent the lexicon and word order of English (but not necessarily the grammatical affixes of English, e.g., suffixes for verb agreement, tense, plurals). In fact, there is no well defined or standardized description of transliteration (even though the term is used as if there were), since this target form attempts to accommodate both the syntactic order of spoken English and a range

of ASL features (including principally the lexicon) in order to convey the message in a signed modality. Transliteration thus results in a variety of interlanguage signing that is "less than a complete message . . . something approximating the source message but not expressing the same subtleties of either source or target language" (Winston, 1989, p.149). Winston notes that transliterators are more constrained in their task than translators or interpreters, because they are expected to produce a form that resembles the source message in English and yet is comprehensible in a visual-manual mode, while drawing on ASL features as part of the target form. Despite the lack of clear definition, however, transliteration appears to be the predominant style of "interpreting" found in higher educational settings in the United States.[1]

Interpreting, within the field of sign language interpreting, is a term often used generically to include both transliterating (as discussed above) and the more generally understood "interpreting," meaning to translate in real-time between two distinct languages (which in this case would be English and ASL). While in this study the focus is on transliteration, the people doing the transliterating are referred to as "interpreters," even though there is a move now in the field to call them "transliterators." This debate over terms hinges on whether transliterating is viewed as a process distinct from what an interpreter does when decoding and reconstructing meaning between English and ASL, or whether the only significant   difference between interpreting and transliterating is the surface form in which the target message is represented. Lacking evidence that there exists any difference in the basic *process* involved in reconstructing an ASL or signed English (i.e., transliterated) message from a source message,   participants in this study will be referred to as "interpreters" rather than "transliterators," but my choice of terms should not be read as definitive.

Review of Studies on Sign Language Interpreting Effectiveness

The literature in this area follow one or the other of two main approaches: (i) measuring interpreting effectiveness according to the overall comprehension of consumers (although no satisfactory definition of "effective interpreting/transliterating" has yet emerged), and (ii) analyzing interpreter errors in relation to a theoretical model of interpretation.

In a comparison of deaf and hearing students' ability to receive and recall information from an interpreted/heard lecture, Jacobs (1981) found that hearing students received higher combined scores on tests of lecture material than deaf students. Deaf students scored correctly on only 84% as many items as did the hearing students, and test scores averaged 83% for hearing, 69% for deaf. Since Jacobs also notes, however, that other studies have found no significant difference in grade point average between deaf and hearing college students, it is still unclear as to how (or if) the remaining information gap is closed by deaf students. Apparently, deaf students rely on other, as yet unknown, strategies for acquiring and assimilating the information necessary for success in college.

Rather than contrasting the efficiency of signed interpretation with audition, however, Fleischer (1975) compares the effectiveness, for deaf consumers, of four different types of classroom interpreting conditions. According to his results, conditions were ranked in the following descending order of effectiveness: ASL with background knowledge, ASL without background knowledge, signed English (transliteration) with background knowledge, and, lastly, signed English without background knowledge, the least effective interpreting condition. While Fleischer's study does not define "signed English," the term is widely understood in the field to mean some combination of ASL vocabulary produced in predominantly English word order, with fingerspelling of terms and some use of ASL parameters, such as the use of placing and indexing locatives in the signing space. This type of signing is distinct from a contrived signing system which represents the derivational affixes on English words, such as "Signing Exact English." Fleischer also notes that "[t]he higher the level of complete bilingualism the deaf student has, the higher the amount of information he receives from the interpreter" (pp. 74-75). His study concludes that it is the dominant or preferred communication mode of a deaf consumer which is crucial and which needs to be included as a factor in assessing interpreter effectiveness in any given situation.

Neither of the above studies explores the possibility that recall from a lecture situation may not be an accurate measure of interpreting effectiveness in other types of educational setting, e.g., the seminar format, in which the communication process is complicated by interactional dynamics, and hence the amount of information and participation lost is potentially greater. These issues have been addressed by Johnson (1989), however, in an

examination of conflicting communication strategies used by deaf and hearing participants in a the university classroom situation. Johnson found that miscommunication was sometimes due to the conflict of aural/oral and visual/manual norms for conveying information. For instance, when visual aids were used in class, deaf students were forced to choose where to direct their attention, thereby losing out on some of the information being responded to in class. Differences in conversation regulators (e.g., turn-taking signals) in auditory as opposed to visual modes also created problems for deaf students in the interpreted situation, particularly in the discussion situations typical of graduate classes.

Johnson also found that transliteration was problematic and confusing when the source message involved spatial descriptions or references to real-world images for which the interpreter had no available referent for visualization purposes (e.g., the appearance of a biological structure or a building layout). In such instances, interpreters tended to resort either to fingerspelling or to using citation forms of signs whose glosses matched individual English words but not necessarily the overall structure or sense of the utterance. This strategy, which did little to give the deaf student a visual equivalent to the spoken description, resulted in loss of information because the deaf students were unable to recover the intended source language (SL) meaning.

An interpreter's degree of familiarity with the subject matter at hand is also an important factor in achieving an understandable and functionally equivalent translation of the source message in a signed form. Wilcox & Wilcox (1985) explored the applicability of schema theory to interpreter accuracy by correlating interpreting proficiency with the ability to make "probability predictions" from an incoming message through use of an auditory cloze. The idea behind the study was that as the message unfolds, a probability prediction field is built up, the closure for which an interpreter may draw on the situational context and his or her own world knowledge. This process enhances comprehension and allows the interpreter to plan ahead based on a sense of what to expect next in the incoming message. Wilcox & Wilcox suggest that an interpreter's ability to make use of the clues in a message and predict accurately may be a major determiner of sign language interpreter proficiency.

Representing the second approach taken in the literature, Cokely (1985) analyzed the frequency and distribution of several types of interpreter target language (TL) errors in relation to a seven-

stage model of the process of interpreting between spoken English and ASL. While Cokely notes that syntactically related errors are overall the most severe obstacles for a consumer's recovery of the SL message, he found that lexically related errors were also problematic. The skilled interpreters he studied were found to produce an average of 1.21 lexical errors and unwarranted substitutions per syntactically acceptable TL sentence. Of these errors, about half were categorized as seriously deviating from the intended meaning of the source message. Using Cokely's theoretical model, analysis of the source of these types of error should be helpful in that it would isolate the different points at which an interpreter might strike trouble in the process of transferring an equivalent message, although as Cokely states, in reality there is more likely to be "a multiple nesting of stages" (p. 173) as the process takes place. In relation to the present study's focus on lexical errors due to mishearing, misunderstanding, or mistranslation, Cokely's model of the stages in the interpreting process (pp. 169-174) are informative, but four are particularly relevant to this study:

i) *Message reception:* At the initial point of "message reception," if the SL message is auditorally perceived incorrectly by the interpreter, an error will result even if subsequent stages are executed accurately. Sometimes the interpreter self-corrects after recognizing errors, but usually he or she interprets the error confidently, assuming the message perceived was the same as the one spoken.

ii) *Preliminary processing*: In this primary recognition process, lexical and other units are identified and "accessed" (or not, as the case may be) in the listener's--in this case the interpreter's-- lexicon. Errors often arise at this point due to a lack of prior understanding of semantic and syntactic context. When interpreter "lag time," to allow for contextual processing, is insufficient, adverse effects on the processing of meaning result.

iii) *Realization of semantic intent*: At this stage, the interpreter arrives at some level of comprehension of at least a portion of the SL message. Ideally this comprehension coincides with the speaker's intent, but it is dependent upon the level (lexical, sentential, phrasal) at which the particular portion of the SL message was analyzed.

iv) *Determination of semantic equivalence*: After the interpreter has attributed meaning to the chunk, he or she now has to determine which linguistic/cultural factors are relevant to conveying

that meaning in the TL. Proficiency in this task, according to Cokely, is dependent on the interpreter's linguistic and cultural competence in the TL. It is also important to note that at this stage if the interpreter has not extracted meaning from the SL message and is simply processing the form of the message at word level (as frequently happens in transliteration), errors will arise because a one-to-one relationship between SL and TL lexical forms does not exist.

There are cases, though, in which the interpreter has understood the SL message but failed to accurately determine a semantic equivalent in the TL. Understanding the SL message does not, therefore, guarantee that a TL equivalent will be identified and produced by the interpreter. Cokely explains this by contending that these two processes are separate. This observation was also borne out in the present study by the results of questioning and retesting interpreters' lexical choices for incorrect interpretations, as will be discussed below. Of overall importance, however, is that according to Cokely's model of the cognitive steps involved in interpretation from one language/mode to another, deviations occurring at any stage of the interpretation process will affect subsequent stages. His analysis of the cognitive tasks involved at each stage of the interpreting process provides a useful theoretical model of the interpreting task, in that it may increase the chances not only of identifying and strengthening an interpreter's areas of weakness, but also of devising strategies for self-monitoring and repair of "faults in the circuit," as it were.

In practical terms, findings from all these studies suggest that deaf students need to be made aware that the sense of confusion they often experience in a classroom situation probably does not originate in their own inability to comprehend the class material. Rather, their confusion may derive from the distortion of a message as it is rendered from one form to another or from the different rules for organizing discourse (e.g., turn-taking) which obtain in aural/spoken vs. visual/manual interaction.

METHODOLOGY

Setting

The present study was carried out in a university setting, in the classes of three deaf students--two graduate students and one undergraduate. Six interpreters were videotaped in half-hour

segments as they interpreted for graduate classes in anthropology and TESL, and for undergraduate classes in chemistry and physics. The six interpreters were selected on the basis of availability and willingness to participate, but also because the classes in which they worked represented a range of subject matter. All interpreters used a predominantly English-like style of signing which would fit the definition of transliteration given above. In addition, the two graduate classes were seminar classes, involving student participation, while the undergraduate science classes were lecture classes.

Interpreter Error Analysis

Videotapes of the six interpreters were initially analyzed for nonequivalent meanings resulting from lexical choices in the target form of the message. Of the six interpreter data samples, only three were found to contain lexical errors relevant to this study (see definition of semantic sign choice errors below). It is interesting to note that the three interpreters who did *not* produce any lexical errors had higher levels of education than the other three (i.e., they all had at least a bachelor's degree, whereas the three who produced lexical errors had been through some kind of interpreter training program but did not hold a university degree). In addition, two of the more highly educated interpreters also had professional interpreter certification, whereas the other four were not certified. Thus, the three interpreters who did produce errors were all interpreting at an educational level above their own and in subject areas with which they were not personally familiar, a situation which probably affected their ability to make lexical choices that would achieve semantic equivalence.

Once the data samples had been narrowed to three, interpreter's errors on the videotapes were first transcribed and sorted into two categories: misperception errors and semantic sign-choice errors (see Appendix A for the complete list). Next, the three interpreters who produced lexical errors were "retested" on their interpreting errors. For this procedure, each interpreter was presented with a sample of his or her original errors two weeks after the class had been videotaped. From the English source message only, each interpreter was then asked to reinterpret these chunks for the researcher. The original incorrect interpretation was not shown or described to the interpreter during this part of the task. Although the chunks were presented out of context, each chunk was

introduced with an explanation of the context by the researcher. In most cases the interpreters had some recall of the general topic of the class from which the example was drawn, although none recognized the specific items presented to them as instances in which they had interpreted incorrectly the first time. Interpreters' second translations from the interview were then compared with the original inaccurate transliteration, and interpreter ability to self-correct was calculated, based on a comparison of the accuracy of first and second interpretations.

In a follow-up discussion with each of the three interpreters (after they had completed the retranslation), interpreters were shown their original and second transliterations and questioned about their reasons for making the original translation they had made on the videotape. Through this discussion, and by asking the interpreters to come up with explanations and definitions of the original English source messages which they had incorrectly interpreted, the researcher attempted to determine whether the error was due to a failure to understand the SL message, an inability to determine a conceptually accurate lexical equivalent, or a decision to simply relay the SL form rather than to determine meaning.

Definition of Semantic Sign-Choice Errors Analyzed in the Study

As has been mentioned, even though transliteration cannot usually represent the exact grammatical inflections of either spoken English or ASL, a minimal expectation is that an interpreter will use a conceptually equivalent sign rather than a literal representation of the English word. For example, the word *take* may be used in phrases with diverse meanings, such as "take some notes," "take a few minutes," "I'm going to take this beaker and pour it . . ." In these contexts, *take* means 'write,' 'use,' and 'pick-up,' respectively. When interpreters failed to convey the context-specific meaning in their choice of sign and instead produced a sign that matched the phonological form but not the meaning of the source message, this was considered a lexical (or sign-choice) error.

Another area of potential nonequivalence is when English words are used metaphorically or in a way which conjures up an image different from the literal sense of the word itself. For instance, "a tree diagram" usually refers to a downward branching information structure, for which the ASL sign "TREE," representing a standing tree with branches pointing upwards, is conceptually

wrong, and thus a different sign should be used which visually matches the concept of a "tree diagram."

Deaf Student Interviews

In the second part of this study, the perspective of deaf students regarding interpreting error was sought. Three deaf students were selected by virtue of their being in the classes of the three interpreters who produced lexical errors. These deaf students were interviewed about their general perceptions of interpreter accuracy and specifically about which kinds of errors they notice the most. In addition, they were asked to describe how they deal with ambiguity or distortions in the signed messages produced by interpreters (see interview questions in Appendix B). It should be noted that the interviews with the deaf students did not involve showing them the videotaped error samples, since the aim was to elicit general observations about interpreter error rather than responses to specific errors or specific interpreters.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:
Interpreter Error Analysis

Misperception Errors

A small proportion (17%) of all errors were due to the interpreter's misperception of the source message because of the inability to hear the speaker clearly or to recognize what was actually said. These errors resulted in TL messages which were clearly nonsensical or unrelated to the context (also referred to as *anomalies*). Examination of the videotaped situations in which the following examples occurred indicated that some were due to difficulty in hearing the utterance fully (especially in discussion settings), but many of the errors derived from constraints on the interpreter's ability to accurately predict in order to extract a meaningful message when an utterance may have been less than 100% clearly perceived. Yet, whether these constraints lie in the individual's "probability prediction" skill (Wilcox & Wilcox, 1985), in auditory distraction or interference is impossible to discern from this data. Examples of errors in perception of the SL message include the following:

SPOKEN ENGLISH	SIGNED TRANSLITERATION (# indicates a fingerspelled word)
it says **"title"**--"give title"	**NOT STEAL IT--TITLE**
describe the **hypothesis, subjects,** method	**DESCRIBE FIVE OFFICES, TITLE** (subject heading), **METHOD**
I talked to a **lady** she said	ME TALK--TO **BOY**--BOY SAY
share-ware computer programs	**CHAIR** #W-A-R-E PROGRAM (looks puzzled)
These (*computer programs*) are written for a college audience	THIS WRITE FOR COLLEGE **FOOTBALL**

Based on the interpreters' confused facial expressions (furrowed brow, squinting) and apparent straining to hear (head tilting, looking at the speaker) which were evident on the videotape, it appears that the trouble which produced these kinds of errors arose at the initial stages of "message reception" and "preliminary processing" (Cokely, 1985), when the unsuccessful recognition of auditory signals subsequently results in deviations from the SL message in later stages of interpretation.

Sign-Choice Errors

A much larger proportion (83%) of the semantic mismatches occurring in the data were categorized as   sign-choice errors. Examples of this sort include:

SPOKEN ENGLISH	SIGNED TRANSLITERATION (# indicates fingerspelled word)
The phones were **down** (*because of the earthquake*)	PHONE **BANKRUPT/FOLD**
So--**how are you doing** with this?	#S-O--**WHAT'S UP?** (*informal ASL greeting = how are you?*)
In the **meantime**	**LATER**
had certain symbolic **advantages**	HAVE SYMBOL **TAKE-ADVANTAGE-OF** (*rip-off*)

| since this is (*because*) | SINCE (*time passing*) |
| argumentative type of writing | ARGUE(*two persons*) KIND WRITE |

Sign-choice errors could have been due to time constraints in the transliterating situation (insufficient lag time to understand the surrounding context or speaker's rate of speech), ignorance of the exact meaning of a SL word as used, or unfamiliarity with the conceptually equivalent ASL sign. Since it would be difficult to isolate and control for these potential sources of error in specifying a cause, interpreters were subsequently retested on interpreting some of the same phrases they had made errors on in the data. The assumption was that making the same error on the retest would indicate either that an interpreter lacked a correct translation in his or her TL lexicon or that he or she could not match the SL word with a definition in their personal English lexicon.

Retest of Interpreters on Sign Choice Errors

The results of the three interpreters' second attempt at interpreting semantic sign-choice errors were as follows:

	Errors Corrected on Retest %	Errors *not* Corrected on Retest %
Interpreter 1	40	60
Interpreter 2	57	43
Interpreter 3	50	50
(Average)	(49)	(51)

Given that 49% of the errors were corrected on the retest (i.e., the second translation offered was more semantically equivalent), it seems most likely that constraints of the transliterating situation itself (e.g., time, ability to hear the speaker clearly, fatigue) were probably influencing the interpreters' preliminary processing and leading to inaccurate lexical choice, rather than the interpreters' knowledge of the meaning of SL or TL forms.

In order to determine the source of error for those items which were not corrected on the retest, each interpreter was

subsequently asked to explain the meaning of the problemematic SL word or phrase. The discussion with the interpreters revealed that of the repeated incorrect translations, the error source could be identified (using Cokely's model) as follows:

	Failure to Realize Semantic Intent (not understanding SL message) %	Failure to Determine Semantic Equivalence (incorrect lexical choice in TL) %
Interpreter 1	50	50
Interpreter 2	21	79
Interpreter 3	60	40
(Average)	(44)	(66)

In the case of the third interpreter, the abstract and philosophical nature of the subject matter and vocabulary might account for failing to understand 60% of the retested SL errors; however, the unknown words in question were not terms specific to the field and are found in general academic English usage. These include: *disenfranchise*, *articulated* set of goals, English-*dominated*, *reformulate* culture.

Overall, slightly less than half of the retested errors were due to a lack of understanding of the SL message, suggesting that first language (English) proficiency and background knowledge plays an extremely important role in interpreter effectiveness. As for failure to determine semantic equivalence in choosing signs, this type of problem accounted for more than half of the retested persistent errors and may be attributable either to a limited range of lexical choices available to the interpreters as second language users or to an incomplete understanding of the semantic properties of certain ASL vocabulary items.

The extent in this small study to which English words were outside the interpreters' receptive vocabulary and the frequency of cases in which lexical equivalents were genuinely not known give pause for thought. The results point to possible weaknesses in the interpreters' training in the semantics of both English and ASL. Since in both lexicons words and signs have various meanings in various contexts, subtleties of semantic equivalence and contrast may need to be studied more thoroughly. Moreover, fluency in source language (English, in this case) and target language (ASL) may need to be treated with more equal emphasis than is done in

interpreter training programs, which often tend to take first-language (L1) proficiency for granted.

As for specific problems with English vocabulary in a university setting, this study suggests that the rate of error may be linked to an interpreter's level of formal education, since the three university-educated interpreters, of the original six participants, did not produce lexical errors of this type and were thus excluded from the error analysis. One obvious implication is that interpreters working in higher education need to avail themselves of the content matter of various fields before expecting to be competent interpreters of these subjects, even if this extra training only extends to the level of conceptual familiarity with the language and typical phrases commonly encountered in that field. An alternative implication is that recruits for interpreter education programs need to have at least a bachelor's level of education, in addition to bilingual proficiency as a prerequisite to entry (as is the case with spoken language interpreters), so as to be equipped for all the contexts in which they might work.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:
Deaf Students' Perceptions of Interpreter Errors

The deaf students interviewed for this study differed from each other in terms of experience with interpreters, bilingual proficiency, and language preference. Student 1, a native ASL signer from a deaf family, describes himself as bilingual (in ASL and English) but ASL-dominant in terms of his everyday, preferred mode of communication; although Student 2 was deafened at age 5, entered a residential school for the deaf at that time, and has used ASL ever since as her primary mode of communication, she is a fluent bilingual and has taught English; Student 3 was born deaf but educated orally. She is fluent in spoken English (her primary mode of communication) but learned sign language as an adult and now signs fluently with English-like syntax, relying on lip-reading with signing for receptive communication. In terms of bilingual fluency and language preference, these three students represent the sort of range of deaf language backgrounds that is found in higher educational settings. Their responses to the interview questions (see Appendix B) are discussed below.

Proportion of Information Received Through an Interpreter

In answer to the first question, all three students said that the percentage of information in class they understood through an interpreter depends on the individual interpreter. Students 1 and 2 felt that if the interpreter is highly skilled, they can receive 90-100% of the information, but if the interpreter is "not good" this percentage would drop to somewhere below 40 or 50%. In Student 3's answer to this question, she drew a distinction between her level of comprehension in a lecture as opposed to a seminar class, saying that her estimation for a seminar class would be around 50% while for a lecture closer to about 80%. The explanation she offered for this discrepancy was that seminar/discussion classes are complicated by interactional dynamics as well as by the physical constraints on an interpreter's ability to interpret more than one voice at any one time or to hear all participants clearly. This is certainly a valid distinction not only in terms of the potential for interpreter accuracy, but also in terms of the student's capacity to follow the flow of a discussion when it is received through a single channel, sometimes without identification of different speakers.

The students' higher estimates for "good interpreter" conditions (80-100% recovery of class content) more or less concur, though perhaps rather on the generous side, with Jacobs' (1976) finding of an 84% comprehension level for deaf students. Since students in this interview were only estimating and not actually being tested on how much information they successfully received, it is not surprising that their estimations are somewhat higher than one might expect, given the interpreters' error data and Cokely's analysis of error frequency. In light of Nida's (1976) assertion that comprehension even between speakers of the same language might not typically rise much above 80%, these deaf students' estimates seem optimistically high. For now there seems no direct way of measuring understanding other than by taking the word of consumers. The *perceived* experience of learning through an interpreter, however, is what is of interest in this study.

Effect of Subject Matter

When asked if the accuracy of an interpreter is affected by the specific subject matter, Students 1 and 2 replied that the interpreter's general level of skill was a far more important

determinant of the interpreter's ability to convey information clearly and accurately than the subject matter. However, Student 1 also observed that an interpreter could be an effective interpreter in the arts and humanities yet have a hard time interpreting science classes to the same standard--in other words, that the subject matter can affect performance but not to the same extent as the general proficiency and flexibility of the individual interpreter. Student 3 responded that although proficiency level was generally a better predictor of accuracy in any given subject, some subjects in her experience, such as English literature, had presented serious hurdles even to very skilled interpreters because of the unusual nature of the language involved. She felt that social science subjects were generally easier to interpret because content consisted of more generalizations and everyday language than special terminology. Two of the respondents also commented that interpreters coming into a new field understandably make more errors in fingerspelling words and names related to the specific subject.

Awareness of Interpreter Errors: Sign Choice

The students were also asked what kinds of errors were noticeable and bothersome in their perception of the message. All the students noted that the major source of conceptual errors, and the most distracting to watch, were either inappropriate lexical choices (e.g., "the phones were down"/"PHONE BANKRUPT/FOLD") or transposing the auditory form of the English word to a sign form which didn't match the meaning (e.g., "he paid *interest* on his mortgage"/ "HE PAY *INTEREST* (*ASL verb*: *to be interested in*) ON HIS #M-O-R-T-G-A-G-E."

When students were asked how these types of inaccuracy affected their understanding of the message, they described different strategies for coping. Student 1 said that the first time the incorrect sign choice appears, he immediately analyzes where the confusion is (relying on context and his knowledge of English homynyms) and translates the form to the appropriate meaning in his head. If the error recurs, he makes a mental note of the deviation, puts it into a kind of short-term reference lexicon for that interpreter for the duration of that class, and refers to this lexicon for clarification each time the error appears in the interpreter's message. His strategy is thus one of accommodation to the interpreter's level of conceptual accuracy, meaning that he takes responsibility for doing the extra work required to recover the intended meaning of the SL message.

Student 2 also goes through the process of mentally translating the lexical item once she has recognized a discrepancy between meaning and form, but when the error recurs a second time, she corrects the interpreter by modelling the correct sign. This approach returns the responsibility for conveying meaning appropriately to the interpreter, hopefully reducing the student's distraction from the content caused by incorrect forms and encouraging the interpreter to be more aware of accuracy. Student 3 was not conscious of how she coped with sign-choice errors, although she reported them to be highly distracting to her comprehension of the content of the message.

Redundant/Confusing Grammar Forms

Students were asked to comment on their reactions when interpreters attempt to sign exact representations of English grammatical function words and structures which do not exist in natural ASL forms (e.g., articles, -ing, -ed, copula forms). All three students said that this bothered them because it looked "unnatural" and unnecessary, though they could usually still manage to extrapolate the meaning. Of course, if this very literal type of transliteration is used for a specific purpose, such as demonstrating an English sentence structure or for a quotation, then it was regarded as perfectly appropriate. In other cases, while the students didn't exactly consider this phenomenon to be "error," they did regard it as unhelpful and even a hindrance for effectively conveying the concept of the SL message. However, Student 3 commented that one area of confusion she had experienced repeatedly is when important grammatical information about passive structures is *omitted* from or not conveyed equivalently in the signed form (because inflections, such as copula and -ed affixes, are not usually conveyed in transliteration). Student 3 said she was frequently confused about who was the agent and who was the object of an action in passive constructions for which the interpreter might transliterate a sentence such as *"I feel I'm not being understood"* to "ME FEEL ME NOT UNDERSTAND." In such a transliteration, the opposite meaning is conveyed, since the subject and object of the sentence are represented in the passive order but without any indication in the sign gloss of an agent (or the lack of one). As Levitt (1984) notes, the best alternative in these situations is to completely reorder the sentence into an active form (i.e., to reorder or insert the subject and object of the sentence) or to make use of the directional properties

which many transitive verbs in ASL possess (in other words, to interpret into ASL rather than transliterate word glosses). Given the frequency of passive constructions in academic discourse, it is not surprising that at least one of the deaf students interviewed in this study cited this as a source of frequent confusion. She also commented that it had taken her a long time to understand why she was experiencing this sense of confusion and of never being sure what the intended SL message could have been.

Misuse of Classifiers

Classifiers, a highly productive system of predicate morphology in ASL (Schick, 1987), are handshapes used to represent objects, people, locatives, and actions. ASL classifiers use three dimensional space to incorporate pronouns, verbs, adverbial aspect, and adjectives, often simultaneously. The classifier system is often quite difficult for second language speakers of ASL (most interpreters) to acquire. When asked if they noticed errors in interpreters' use of classifiers, all three students reported that the inaccurate use of classifiers (to describe spatial relationships or movement between objects or people) was especially frequent and problematic when the teacher was verbally describing a scene or picture without the aid of a diagram or model in the classroom to refer to. The students agreed that if there were a visual aid of some sort to refer to or if the relationships had previously been made clear, they could accommodate deviations in the interpreter's representation without major disruption of the message (although use of visual aids does require deaf students to make a momentary choice as to where to direct their attention). When visual aids are lacking, however, the interpreter's accuracy in the use of classifiers to specify spatial relationships becomes crucial to understanding the message, and all students reported that this type of information is frequently lost or confused through the translation process (see also Johnson, 1989). For conveying information in a visual modality such as sign language, classifiers are uniquely efficient in making use of three-dimensional space to indicate spatial relationships, quality and type of movement, or subject/object marking in a sentence. Yet the achievement of message equivalence for the accuracy and specificity of meaning conveyable in a signed form by classifiers is often impossible or cumbersome in signed English transliteration. Thus, even interpreters who work principally in a transliterated mode (as opposed to ASL) can greatly enhance the

range of communicative tools at their disposal by becoming skilled in the use of ASL classifier systems.

Misperceived "Anomalies"

The three students were also asked about "anomalies" in interpreted information (i.e., instances when the message seemed to be nonsensical or wildly divergent in context), such as those caused by the interpreter mishearing or somehow completely misunderstanding the SL utterance. All the students reported that this kind of error is difficult to identify. Student 1 said that he often sees something that looks like a deviation from the context but is never absolutely sure whether the source of the anomaly is the speaker, the interpreter, or his own comprehension. Students 2 and 3 made similar comments, emphasizing that confusion often occurs in such instances without any conscious explanation or resolution. Student 3 said that she can sometimes "hold onto" these puzzling fragments for a short time and "figure it out" in light of subsequent context in the incoming message. Both students 2 and 3 mentioned relying on their notes (taken by a hearing notetaker) to clarify or discount any anomalous deviations noticed during class. From these reports it is clear that deaf students are doing extra cognitive "work" in their processing and review of incoming information as they analyze and filter possible sources of misunderstanding coming through the interpreter.

Omission

When asked to comment on interpreter omission of information, the students made the general observation that it is difficult for deaf consumers to know for sure if something has been omitted unless they are in a position to clearly see if speech or conversation is taking place which is not being transmitted by the interpreter. Student 2, however, noted that she is sensitive to whether the interpreter has lost or is omitting information either by his/her facial expression and body cues or (sometimes) the interpreter's aside that he or she has missed something. This student also commented that she appreciates it when an interpreter takes the initiative to ask the speaker for clarification if something is not heard clearly or is an unfamiliar term, instead of simply continuing and hoping to pick up the information from context later on, as is commonly done by interpreters in those situations. Student

1 noticed that he is most aware of information omission when the speaker is following a predictable course (e.g., explaining a diagram to which she is pointing systematically, following an outline previously specified), or when other class members react visibly to something to which he was not privy, such as an aside comment or a joke that the interpreter felt unable to translate effectively and so chose to ignore.

Student 3 cited instances of interpreters beginning a sentence, then breaking off abruptly in the middle and going on to something else with no explanation or apparent cause for the lack of completion. She found this partial conveyance of information very irritating and puzzling, for she was left trying to guess what interference might have affected the reception of the source message or the interpreter's translation. Sometimes, of course, interpreters are capturing a speaker actually breaking off in mid-sentence, a not uncommon occurrence in extemporaneous speech, especially when a teacher might be performing two tasks at once (for example, writing on the board and talking). Similarly, a speaker may begin a sentence and then decide to retract or rephrase the statement part way through without signifying this in any way except with the briefest pause. At other times, particularly in discussions, it appears that an interpreter has to make choices between competing voices. An interpreter thus might begin interpreting one speaker, then suddenly become aware of an interjection and begin to interpret that voice instead, leaving the deaf consumer hanging as to what happened to the first half-utterance. When faced with competing, overlapping voices, an interpreter is also frequently unable to hear any one speaker clearly enough to continue interpreting and may therefore choose to sign fragments. These are clearly unavoidable contingencies in the interpreting process, but the implication of these students' comments is that it would be informative if interpreters would at least briefly indicate the loss of information to the deaf consumer, rather than just obscuring or ignoring it.

Interpreter's Representation of New Terms

When asked about the issue of interpreting new terminology or words for which no commonly used sign exists, students varied somewhat as to how they thought the information should be conveyed. All the students agreed that a new term must be clearly fingerspelled initially, but for repeated translation of the word they expressed different preferences. Students 1 and 3 had no objection

to an interpreter inventing a sign on the spot to be used for the duration of that class if it facilitated the smooth flow of information. However, Student 1 said that repeated fingerspelling presented no comprehension problems for him (unless the interpreter is not a proficient fingerspeller), whereas Student 3 felt that repeated fingerspelling definitely required extra decoding concentration on her part and was disruptive to the flow of the message. Student 2 felt strongly that invention of signs by interpreters exceeds the interpreter's role (and their limitations as second-language acquirers of sign language in most cases). She reported that she prefers to provide the interpreter with a sign or to quickly negotiate a translation form which is mutually acceptable to both of them to be used from then on. Some tension in attitudes and responses was evident here, between pragmatic concerns for getting the information, on the one hand, and concerns as to whether the role of an interpreter warrants creation of new lexical sign forms, on the other.

Strategies for Coping with Ambiguity

As a native ASL signer (i.e., born to deaf parents and raised with ASL as a first language), Student 1's comments reveal a willingness to tolerate and accommodate interpreter distortions to a much greater degree than Student 2 whose comments show her to be more interested in being actively involved in attaining accuracy in the interpreting process. This tendency on her part might come from her being experienced in teaching sign language to hearing people, in that she has a teacher's instructive instinct when faced with language errors. Student 3, the more English-oriented signer, also expressed a tolerance for interpreters' conceptual inaccuracy in the classroom, though it was she who reported the greatest degree of confusion and ambiguity in the messages she perceived in class, a response which was consistent with the low estimates for overall comprehension she gave in Question 1. Of course, since tolerance levels for ambiguity vary from individual to individual, this might also be a factor in coping with interpreter distortion, aside from language preference or degree of bilingualism.

The experiences of these deaf students correspond with Cokely's (1985) assertion that transliteration is only viable for bilingual consumers because "transliterations . . . require that TL consumers understand the SL form in order to understand the intended SL meaning . . . the strategy merely places the burden of

coping with SL message form on the TL consumers" (pp. 220-221). This burdening effect is even more apparent when the transliteration or interpretation is conceptually inaccurate at the lexical level. The ability to decode transliteration is thus clearly contingent upon familiarity with the forms and structures of the two languages involved (in this case, English and ASL), but consumers also apparently need to be able to extrapolate meaning from partial, incomplete, or distorted forms of both languages, which comprise a substantial portion of the TL message in signed transliteration.

Overall Interpreting Preference

Finally, when asked to make an overall choice between an interpreter who is a proficient transliterator, conveying every word uttered in class but in a less fluent signing style, and an interpreter who translates concepts and structures into more ASL-like forms, but is fluent and comfortable to watch, all three students unhesitatingly said they would pick the latter. Student 1 remarked that no matter how accurate a transliterator may be, if the transliterated message produced is visually boring to watch, the deaf consumer will be unable to focus attention and will lose the information in the long run, despite the interpreter's diligence in conveying every word. Such comments support the view that "where conceptual exchange between teacher and student is far more crucial than proper language exposure, the interpreter should be sensitive to and in tune with Deaf students' maximum comfort in regard to communication mode" (Fleischer, 1975, p. 75).

CONCLUSION

Given that Fleischer's suggestion appeared in 1975 , it might seem redundant to be citing new data that supports the same conclusion. Yet, the results of this small study reveal an anachronistic reality in which at least a proportion of interpreters are still making the same kinds of mistakes fifteen years later. One major difference between now and then, however, is that an increasing number of deaf students are entering mainstream universities for study at all levels. The issue of an interpreter's ability to convey accurate and equivalent information to deaf students has thus become even more crucial than in the mid-1970s, when studies on interpreter effectiveness in the classroom were just emerging. Another difference is that today there exists a larger body

of research, information, and expertise in the field of sign language linguistics and interpreting, all of which could be more effectively applied to improving interpreters' understanding and performance of their important task.

This study has reiterated the observation that the most conspicuous problem arising in transliteration is the transfer of source language forms rather than meanings into the signed modality. This problem involves three main challenges for the interpreter: (1) complete comprehension of the meaning of the source language message; (2) accurate selection of equivalent lexical forms for expressing that meaning in the target language; and (3) whether the task is approached as simply coding or as one which requires mental processing identical to interpreting, i.e., analysis of meaning at the phrasal and textual level. If this third question of interpreters' perception and practice of their task would be more thoroughly grounded in research, the answer could be applied to interpreter preparation, and specifications for the requisite skills of a "qualified" interpreter might be better defined. Once accomplished, this definition of the interpreter's task and reorientation of training goals might then lead to eventually redressing the first two problems.

It should be noted that when the interpreters in this study were interviewed, they seemed to find the analysis of their errors to be enlightening and even surprising in many cases. The interpreters were challenged to question what interpreting decisions they had been making and why, and they found this interaction with a critical observer to be productive. Their reactions suggest that regular external feedback could significantly enhance interpreters' awareness and monitoring of meaning equivalence. Many interpreters no doubt know this, but they can't, don't, or won't put this knowledge into practice, to the probable ongoing detriment of deaf consumers. Unfortunately, the kinds of errors considered here to be avoidable by improved training are those which result from the lack of intuitive judgments about semantic equivalence, which accompanies a lack of second language proficiency/experience. This is a familiar problem to teachers of foreign languages, but it is even more crucial for professionals working between two languages, for the success or outcomes of communication rest partly on their lexical decisions (among other factors, of course).

In addition, this study shows that the perspectives on sign language interpreting/transliterating gained from interviews with deaf students are informative, both in terms of their common

observations and of the individual variation in responses that they reflect. Indeed, research that elicits this sort of consumer feedback can be of benefit both to deaf consumers and to interpreters working in educational settings. The combination of presenting interpreters with the type of errors analyzed in this study and of eliciting feedback from deaf students about distortions they perceive in transliterated information may be just the kind of stimulus required to jolt interpreters and interpreter educators into addressing more analytically the problem of semantic equivalence in interpreter education.

Notes
[1]The dynamics of how, where, and why code-switching occurs spontaneously between ASL and English-like forms of signing by deaf and hearing signers is treated at length in Lucas (1989, Chapter 1).

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APPENDIX A: ERROR DATA

Key:
# indicates a fingerspelled word
parenthetical remarks provide contextual and semantic explanations
++ indicates repetition of a sign to show continued progressive aspect

Misperceived Errors

it says "title"-- "give title"	NOT STEAL IT--TITLE
describe the hypothesis, subjects, method	DESCRIBE FIVE OFFICES, TITLE (*subject heading*), METHOD
I talked to a lady--she said	ME TALK TO BOY BOY SAY
I'm not saying this is pedagogically defensible--vocabulary in context and so on--obviously you don't have to draw pictures on the screen	ME NOT-KNOW HOW PUT IN ALL WORDS BUT OBVIOUS NEED USE WORDS BUT NOT HAVE-TO DRAW
share-ware (*computer*) programs	CHAIR #W-A-R-E PROGRAM
These (*computer programs*) are written for a college audience	THIS WRITE FOR COLLEGE FOOTBALL
then it's very difficult for me to give you anything but zero for that problem	THEN VERY HARD FOR ME GIVE ZERO POINTS THAT PROBLEM
but he did it, he came up with--any questions about retrograde motion--just the idea?	BUT HE #D-I-D #I-T--KNOW ANY IDEA ITSELF CONNECT (*about*) #R-M (*affirmative head nod*)
The reason this trick works for drawing ellipses	#S-T-O-R-Y WORK--BECAUSE
sociolinguistics--the study of national identity and what language you do your paper-work in--it's very interesting. It's a whole kettle of worms	SOCIOLINGUISTICS--CONNECT SOCIETY LANGUAGE--WHICH PAPER WITH--WHOLE QUOTE #K-E-T-T-L-E #O-F WORMS
in more traditional societies it works better than ones that show obvious variation on the surface	NOT ALWAYS SHOW VARIATION SURFACE
several disparate groups	SEVERAL DESPERATE GROUPS

Semantic Sign-Choice Errors

have a certain predisposition	HAVE SPECIFIC POSITION
that implies	THAT IDEA
an abiding personality type	OBEDIENT PERSONALITY

I wasn't having much luck with it	ME NOT LUCKY
My hobby is amateur radio	#A-M-A-T-E-U-R-E--BEGINNER RADIO
the phones were down (*because of the earthquake*)	PHONE BANKRUPT/FOLD
The hospital was a mess	HOSPITAL TERRIBLE
Dennis has given us a little cognate	#D-E-N-N-I-S GIVE LITTLE-BIT HELP
I called at 8pm, at that time they didn't know	ME CALL TIME 8--BEFORE (*long time ago*) THEY NOT-KNOW
(*pointing to sentence on blackboard*) If you have two spaces here	IF TWO (*hits thumb as on typewriter spacebar*)
It's something like a tree--a branching out kind of program, with options--you can see how it has a tree pattern, where if you pick one thing you get something else down below	SAME TREE (*upright tree sign*)--OPTIONS--TREE (*makes action of selecting from tree fingers, in upward direction*)
translate to Spanish	BECOME SPANISH
So--how are you doing with this?	#S-O--WHAT'S UP? (*informal ASL greeting = how are you?*)
a "how to" kind of outline	HOW TO (*directional*) KIND OUTLINE
argumentative type of writing	ARGUE (*two persons*) KIND WRITE
Most molecules can be made into a solid	MOST MOLECULES CAN SHAPE SOLID
If I'm going to handle it I need to wear a mitt	IF GOING CONTROL NEED GLOVE
we'll see if we can get it (*the experiment*) to behave	SEE IF CAN CONTROL #I-T
in the meantime	LATER
We can guess the amount of oxygen	CAN GUESS HOW-MANY (*question form*) #O-X
in small amounts	IN SMALL COUNTS
We get a chemical reaction	GET CHEMICAL RESPONSE (*reply*)
carbon compounds	#C-A-R-B-O-N PARTS--#C-O-M-P-O-U-N-D-S
has the same properties	HAVE SAME PARTS

This process absorbs heat	THIS PLAN ABSORB HEAT
on a similar vein to these questions	ON SAME WAY THIS QUESTIONS
Let's hope he comes through on that (*marking the homework*)	HOPE HE SHOW-UP
There have been--historically--two major advances in theories of gravity	#H-A-V-E #B-E-E-N 2 THEORY RAISE-LEVEL IN GRAVITY
So--if you're not careful you'll conclude that Mars is moving from left to right, which is actually <u>backwards</u> to the direction Mars is going	NOT CAREFUL YOU THINK #M-A-R-S ITSELF MAYBE LEFT (*sign moves left-to-right across sign space*) NOT (*negative headshake*) BACK (*over shoulder*) FROM MARS #I-S- GO
their profit orientations	THEIR PROFIT KNOWLEDGE-EXPERIENCE
had certain symbolic advantages	HAVE SYMBOL TAKE-ADVANTAGE-OF (*rip-off*)
Most churches are English-dominated	MOST CHURCH ENGLISH CONTINUE
allows them to reformulate (*culture*)	ALLOW AGAIN--FORMULA (*math*)
you disenfranchise many people	DISCONNECT MANY PEOPLE
it relieves the burden of having to know	OFFER--TAKE RESPONSIBILITY PEOPLE MUST KNOW
shared, articulated set of goals	SHARE, SPEECH SET-UP GOALS
substantial sharing of cultural knowledge in general	#S-U-B-S-T-A-N--ENOUGH SHARE INFORMATION GENERAL
general cognitive sharing and non-sharing about cultural knowledge	GENERAL UNDERSTAND++SHARE AND NOW SHARE ABOUT KNOWLEDGE
takes a point of view	SET-UP POINT LOOK-AT-PERSON
He was combatting a dominant view at the time	HIMSELF AGAINST TIME (*period*)
this idea that there's an ideal personality	IDEA THAT HAVE SPECIFIC TASTE--ALL MATCH ONE
we can assume that	WE CAN TAKE-UP/ADOPT THAT
Around the 9th century	AROUND (*encircling*) 9TH #C-E-N-T-U-R-Y
a major battle	MOST BATTLE
since this is (*because*)	SINCE (*time passing*)

What does that remind you of?	WHAT THAT REMIND (*tap shoulder/get attention*) YOU #O-F?
Someone's hoarding them!	SOME ONE COLLECT++HOLD
they managed to destroy	THEY MANAGE (*control*) DESTROY
it was largely in the process of	LARGE PROCESS #O-F
that very behavior is	THAT VERY (*intensifier*) BEHAVIOR
this cylinder will turn it upside down on top of the candle burning here	(*CLASSIFIER hold tubular shape and upturn*) TOP #O-F #C-A-N-D-L-E
The test will be 8 to 10 questions	TEST WILL #B-E- 8 TO (*directional*) 10 QUESTION
an expository, narrative outline	CONVERSATION OUTLINE
Have you tried to write?	HAVE (*possessive*) YOU (*plural*) TRY WRITE?
Have you looked at that program?	HAVE (*possessive*) YOU (*plural*) FINISH READ?
and so will the midterm	#S-O WILL MIDTERM
This was made into a solid	THIS MAKE IN SOLID
now I'm going to take a liquid	NOW ME GO TO (*directional*) TAKE #L-I-Q-U-I-D
it will change into a gas	WILL CHANGE IN GAS
how complicated it must have been for Kepler	HOW COMPLEX MUST (*modal*) HAVE (*possessive*) #B-E FOR #K-E-P-L-E-R
You might have noticed	YOU MAYBE HAVE (*possessive*) NOTICE

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR DEAF STUDENTS.

1. Approximately what percentage of a lecture do you feel you understand through an interpreter?
2. Does the type of subject (e.g., a more technical subject) make a difference as to how well the interpreter can get the information across?
3. Do you ever notice that interpreters make errors?
4. Do any *kinds* of interpreter errors bother you in particular?
For example:
    (i) Interpreter uses wrong sign, e.g., EVERYDAY instead of SAME to mean something *in common*.

(ii) Interpreter signs English grammatical words that have no meaning in ASL, e.g., MUST HAVE (*possessive*) BEEN VERY DIFFICULT.

(iii) Interpreter wrongly uses ASL classifiers to indicate visual elements such as diagrams (e.g., wrong direction or placement).

(iv) Interpreter mishears/misunderstands then signs something anomalously out of context.

(v) Interpreter omits information, comments, etc.

5. If an unfamiliar word comes up in the lecture, do you prefer the interpreter to fingerspell or make up/approximate a sign for it, or do you tell the interpreter what to sign?

6. What do you do when you think the interpreter has made an error? Can you make sense of the message?

7. Which is more important to you: (i) that the interpreter accurately signs absolutely everything said in class in the same order it was said, or (ii) that the interpreter translates the ideas and language in a way that is more ASL-like, but is fluent and comfortable to read?

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Oral Skills Testing: A Rhetorical Task Approach[1]

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This paper discusses the development, implementation, and evaluation of a semi-direct test of oral proficiency: the Rhetorical Task Examination (RTE). Many of the commonly used speaking instruments assess oral proficiency in terms of either discrete linguistic components--fluency, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary--or in terms of a single, global ability rating. The RTE proposes a compromise approach to rating oral skills by having two scales: one which ascertains the functional ability to accomplish a variety of rhetorical tasks, the other to address the linguistic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980) displayed in the performance.

On audiotape in a language laboratory setting, 52 students representing three levels of a university ESL program performed six tasks related to the rhetorical modes covered in their coursework: short questions and answers, description, narration, process (giving directions), opinion, and comparison-contrast. The construction and justification of both the instrument and the rating scales are explained; data obtained from administering the RTE across classes as well as before and after instruction are presented; and the relevant measurement characteristics of the test are discussed. Results of this study indicate that the Rhetorical Task Examination is promising as a measure of oral proficiency in terms of practicality, reliability, and validity.

INTRODUCTION

The testing of oral proficiency is one area in applied linguistics in which, until recently, practice has lagged behind theory, though speaking in a second or foreign language is arguably the most important of the traditional four skill areas (reading, writing, listening, and speaking). Unfortunately, it is also the most problematic to measure. Nevertheless, in the last decade, much effort has gone into the development, implementation, and evaluation of instruments which assess oral ability (e.g., Bachman

& Palmer, 1981, 1982; Bachman & Savignon, 1986; Lantolf & Frawley, 1985; Palmer et al., 1981; Pienemann et al., 1988; Raffaldini, 1988; Shohamy, 1988). Many oral proficiency tests, such as the Cambridge First Certificate Examination (FCE) (UCLES, 1987), the General Tests of English Language Proficiency (G-TELP) (TENEC, 1985) and the Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit (SPEAK) (Educational Testing Service, 1985) use discrete component-oriented rating scales to evaluate aspects of oral proficiency. They look at orally produced language as something which can be parcelled into separate categories for rating purposes, such as fluency, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. While such discrete components certainly contribute to what is called 'oral proficiency', it may be desirable in a testing situation to go beyond these restrictive linguistic categories for a broader view of a student's language use in a given performance (Carroll, 1980).

Some established tests do take a more holistic perspective towards the assessment of oral proficiency, most notably the Foreign Service Institute/Interagency Language Roundtable (FSI/ILR) Interview (Lowe, 1982) and its derivative, the American Council on Teaching Foreign Languages/Educational Testing Service (ACTFL/ETS) Oral Proficiency Interview (ACTFL, 1986). These tests are not only based on a functional trisection (Clark & Clifford, 1988) of linguistic accuracy, functional breadth, and a range of topics and situations, they also define performance requirements at each proficiency level in terms of these three components. Nevertheless, their rating scales provide a single, global rating of proficiency. This practice has been criticized on the grounds that neither current linguistic theory nor language testing research supports the notion of language as a unitary ability (Bachman, 1988, 1990).

Therefore, the challenge facing us was to develop a test, complete with rating scales, that views a nonnative speaker's performance data across a variety of rhetorical tasks, not just in terms of linguistic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983) but also in terms of functional ability--that is, how well the speaker accomplishes a rhetorical task and maintains coherent, comprehensible discourse. The primary objective of this paper is to report the development of such a speaking test with its corresponding rating scales.

Ideally, a direct approach (Clark, 1979) to oral proficiency testing, in which spontaneous, face-to-face interaction is required, should be used. However, tests which most closely approximate

authentic interaction require extensive training to administer and score and can be costly as well. Therefore, in the interest of practicality and feasibility, we chose to develop a semi-direct test in which students are provided with a test booklet as well as aural stimuli and for which responses are recorded on audiotape. While semi-direct tests do not constitute true interactive conversation, they have been found to correlate highly with and can be considered acceptable alternatives to direct interviewing procedures (Clark & Clifford, 1988; Lowe & Clifford, 1980).

One goal which guided the project was to determine if our speaking instrument measured a range of ability which paralleled level placement as assessed by the examination at the university where this project was undertaken, the UCLA ESLPE (University of California, Los Angeles, English as a Second Language Placement Examination). Many university ESL/EAP placement tests have reading, writing, listening, and grammar components, since these skill areas are the most easily and efficiently tested. However, many of these same university ESL/EAP programs also include courses which teach and practice oral skills, though their placement tests may not measure these skills, directly or indirectly. This was the case at UCLA where addressing this situation became one of the objectives for developing our test.

A second goal, which also figured into the design of the instrument, was our interest in creating an oral achievement test that paralleled class activities in a low-intermediate multi-skills ESL course (ESL 33A) organized around rhetorical modes. That is, the test was also designed to assess students' functional and linguistic ability to perform various rhetorical tasks before and after ten weeks of instruction.

A final objective in the test development process was to evaluate the instrument's measurement characteristics, specifically its reliability and validity.

METHOD

Subjects

The *Rhetorical Task Examination* (*RTE*) was administered in the Fall quarter, 1986, to a total of 52 ESL/EAP students at UCLA (17 in ESL 33A, a low-intermediate course, 17 in ESL 33B, a high-intermediate course, and 18 in ESL 33C, an advanced course).

These three multi-skills courses were required of foreign students who placed below an exempt proficiency level as determined by the ESL Placement Examination (ESLPE) 1986 version.[2]

Administration

The RTE, which takes approximately 18 minutes, was administered on the second day of class in a language laboratory where an entire class could be tested and recorded in one sitting. Each student was presented with a test booklet containing written instructions, prompts, and pictures, but instructions and prompts were given aurally as well. Students, as a group, were allowed specific allotments of time (from 1 to 1 1/2 minutes) to respond to each rhetorical task on the audiotape. These tapes were then used for purposes of rating, which took place *after* the test administration (see the description of the rating procedure below). Since the students in all but the advanced course (ESL 33C) also took the RTE at the end of the ten-week quarter, there are pretest and posttest ratings on approximately two-thirds of the subjects. In view of our stated goals, the purpose of the pretest was to assess the instrument's utility in measuring oral proficiency across a range of student ability, while the main purpose of the posttest was to measure achievement in the two courses (ESL 33A and 33B) that devote a substantial amount of time to the teaching of the speaking skill.

Instrument

The RTE is composed of two sections. The task section includes several "warm-up" short-answer questions (not rated) plus five rhetorical tasks: description, narration, process (giving directions), opinion, and comparison-contrast. This section uses pictures and/or short instructions to elicit talk (see Underhill, 1987, for a discussion of the merits of using pictures to elicit oral language). The rhetorical tasks were chosen according to the following criteria: a) whether or not they parallel the rhetorical patterns taught in the university's ESL courses (though the emphasis in the required courses, especially in the advanced course, ESL 33C, is on writing in these modes); b) whether or not they encompass the kinds of speaking activities that take place in the courses where speaking is taught, thus allowing the test to serve as a measure of achievement; and c) whether or not we perceived them as

authentic or natural speaking situations which students face both in the university environment and in everyday life. Examples A and B in Appendix A show the prompts for the opinion and comparison-contrast tasks.[3]

The second section, an imitation section, was also included as an additional testing method, one that is less direct than the task section but easier to administer and rate. The imitation passage--similar to one developed by Henning (1983), but here contextualized so that the entire passage was a connected story--included ten sentences, ranging from 2 to 12 words, which students heard and then repeated.

Two "equivalent" forms (A and B) of the RTE were created so that one could be used as a posttest.[4] Schematically, the test versions were as follows:

Version 1: Tasks A, Imitation A
Version 2: Tasks B, Imitation B
Version 3: Imitation A, Tasks A
Version 4: Imitation B, Tasks B

The test versions were randomly assigned to students to control for possible ordering effects.

Rating Scales

From a practical standpoint, it was initially hoped that one rating scale could be developed that would cover both the functional skills necessary to perform the rhetorical tasks and the linguistic skills that oral proficiency tests have traditionally measured. It became apparent early on, however, that this would be impractical because many of the students did not perform consistently well or performed poorly in both these areas. For example, a student low in grammar and pronunciation skills might nevertheless perform well on a given task--that is, the student's giving of directions on how to get from one place to another might be clear and successfully comprehended (Raffaldini (1988) came to a similar conclusion: the acquisition of the various traits of communicative competence does not necessarily proceed in a parallel fashion). Therefore, two sets of 4-point scales were developed for each rhetorical task: one set for rating overall task performance (i.e., functional ability) and one set for rating linguistic skills on that same task. It should be pointed out that we are not advocating the *replacement* of the linguistic skills scale with the functional ability/task scale, but its use as a way of

attaining additional, yet fundamental, information on the subjects' oral ability.

The functional ability rating scales for the rhetorical tasks were created after considering data obtained from two native speakers, six nonnative speakers not involved in the UCLA ESL classes, and 18 ESL 33A students who had been given a pilot version of the RTE in 1985. A detailed discourse analysis of these responses (Riggenbach & Lazaraton, 1988) generated a set of important components for each task, which were extracted and built into the descriptors for each scale.

The linguistic skills rating scale is a combination of various oral proficiency scales from several sources (e.g., Harris, 1969; Oller, 1979; TENEC, 1985). As was mentioned, we were dissatisfied with the way these scales view linguistic skills separately; we hoped to evaluate linguistic ability holistically. While our scale does describe discrete skill areas which comprise oral proficiency, an attempt was made to have the scales focus on comprehensibility rather than on accuracy--in other words, how well control or lack of control of linguistic skills contributed to or detracted from the ability to accomplish the task. In addition, we thought it would be possible and practical to group linguistic skill areas (fluency, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary) together, rather than to rate each skill for each task. Although it might seem counterintuitive to group all linguistic skills together, it was the rare case when one particular area (e.g., pronunciation) differed more than one point from other skill areas (fluency, grammar, vocabulary). Rather than assuming an invariant relationship between skills, the approach we took was to assign the rating which best described the subject's linguistic performance on each task. Accordingly, each point on the rating scale includes these four skills. Appendix B shows the two rating scales for one of the tasks, the narrative.

In addition, for the pretest, each student's overall linguistic performance on the task section of the RTE was rated using a third scale (see Appendix C) adapted from an FSI "supplemental" rating scale (Educational Testing Service, 1970; reprinted in Oller, 1979, pp. 321-323). Fluency, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary were rated separately on this third scale in order at the onset to determine if our linguistic skills scale related to a more established rating scale. The ratings from this scale, however were included only in the analyses of the pretest results. The rating of the imitation task is discussed in the following section.

Rating Procedures

For this project, we served as test administrators, as raters, and as co-instructors for the low-intermediate course (ESL 33A) at the time of the test administration. However, ratings for the first administration were blind in that none of the students was known to us at the beginning of the quarter. In addition, ratings were done independently, and tapes were chosen randomly from a pool of tapes from all levels.

For the imitation section, speech samples were rated for accuracy and intelligibility (in the sense of "error-free repetition" as in Henning, 1983, p. 317). Typical errors included addition, substitution, or deletion of words, incorrect inflection of words (third person singular -s, past tense -ed), and incorrect or unintelligible pronunciation of words. Raters checked to see if they made similar judgments about correct vs. incorrect inflection and pronunciation. The total rating for this section represented the total number of words correct.

Pilot data were used for training purposes. After each task was rated independently, the ratings were compared and discussed, prompting minor adaptations to the rating scales.

It was decided that for cases of disagreement of more than three points on the imitation rating and two points on the functional ability/task and linguistic skills ratings, a third rater, trained later, would be appointed. This was necessary in only three cases, perhaps because of the raters' initial contribution to the rating scale and the rigor of the training session.

RESULTS

In this section we discuss the statistical analyses which address the questions posed at the beginning of this paper. To reiterate, we wanted to determine both if the Rhetorical Task Examination measured a range of student ability which mirrored course placement by the UCLA ESLPE and if the RTE would be suitable as a measure of oral achievement in the low-intermediate ESL 33A class. An alpha level of <.05 was selected for all statistical decisions.

Course Placement

To determine if the RTE would be appropriate for course placement (specifically, did the test measure a range of ability which paralleled level placement by the ESLPE?), only pretest data were used for between-class comparisons. Table 1 gives the descriptive statistics for all three classes on four measures: 1) functional ability/task rating (5 tasks, 4 possible points per task); 2) linguistic skills rating (5 tasks, 4 possible points per task); 3) FSI-adapted rating (4 areas, 5 possible points per area); and 4) imitation rating (70 possible points).

TABLE 1
Pretest Descriptive Statistics by Class

Class	N	Functional ability		Linguistic skills		FSI-adapted		Imitation	
		Mean	sd	Mean	sd	Mean	sd	Mean	sd
33A	17	10.71	2.7	10.35	3.4	10.59	3.4	45.97	14.4
33B	17	13.79	2.9	12.00	3.3	11.62	3.0	52.12	11.7
33C	18	12.89	2.6	13.69	3.8	13.56	2.8	59.75	11.0

As Table 1 shows, students in the higher levels (33B and 33C) were rated higher than students in 33A on all measures. Yet, while the lowest ratings were consistently assigned to 33A, 33C showed the highest ratings for all but the functional ability/task for which 33B was rated the highest. Due to the numerical differences in the means present in Table 1, the nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis One-way Analysis of Variance procedure was chosen to test for statistical differences in each of the pretest measures across classes.[5] These results appear in Table 2.

TABLE 2
Kruskal-Wallis Test
Pretest Measures
(N=52)

Measure	x^2	eta^2
Functional ability/task	8.73*	.17
Linguistic skills	7.13*	.14
FSI-adapted	8.73*	.17
Imitation	10.31*	.20
*$p < .05$		

For the functional ability/task ratings, Table 1 showed that the 33B ratings were numerically the highest and that the 33A ratings were the lowest. Statistically, the Kruskal-Wallis test indicated a significant difference between the ratings for all three classes. A post hoc Ryan's procedure indicated that the 33A ratings were significantly lower than the 33B ratings at $p < .05$. However, the *eta*^{2} value showed a weak strength of relationship: only 17% of the variance in functional ability/task ratings could be accounted for by the class in which a student was enrolled.

The results of testing for differences between the three classes on the remaining three pretest measures (linguistic skills, FSI-adapted, imitation) showed identical results for each measure: there were significant differences in the ratings for the three classes, and the 33A (low-intermediate) ratings were significantly lower than the 33C (advanced) ratings at $p < .05$. Although the differences in ratings between 33A and 33B and between 33B and 33C were not significant, the pattern illustrated here, higher level = higher rating, is what one would expect, given the purpose of the ESLPE. Again, the class membership did not explain a great deal of the variance in these three pretest measures (from 14% to 20%).

Therefore, the results of the RTE were similar to the results of the ESLPE in terms of level placement, with the exception of the functional ability/task ratings: in general, the higher the rating, the higher the level (the reverse also being true). Of course, level had already been determined at the time of the pretest.

Achievement

Our second question was whether low-intermediate (ESL 33A) students made measurable performance gains by the end of the ten-week quarter. To test this statistically, the nonparametric Wilcoxon Matched-Signs Ranked-Pairs test was selected. Table 3 shows the results of the Wilcoxon tests for the 33A students on the three posttests.

TABLE 3
Wilcoxon Matched-Signs Ranked Pairs Test
33A Pretest and Posttest Ratings

	Pretest Mean	sd	Posttest Mean	sd	z	N	eta²
Functional ability/task	10.75	2.8	13.34	2.9	3.35*	16	.75
Linguistic skills	10.50	3.5	11.47	3.6	2.07*	16	.28
Imitation	45.97	14.4	53.38	9.0	2.89*	17	.52

* p < .05
Note: The differences in means and standard deviations in Tables 1, 3, and 4 are due to student attrition in the courses.

As Table 3 shows, low-intermediate (33A) students appear to have made significant gains on all three measures, the most dramatic being in functional ability/task ratings. There is a very strong relationship between functional ability/task rating and time ($eta^2 = .75$). While the 33A students also made significant gains on the other two measures, the strength of relationship between these measures and time was not as impressive, especially for the linguistic skills ratings. Yet, because there was no control group, we cannot be sure why these gains were made. Analyses of the high-intermediate (33B) posttest data showed these students did *not* make significant gains from pretest to posttest on any of the measures, as shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4
Wilcoxon Matched-Signs Ranked Pairs Test
33B Pretest and Posttest Ratings

	Pretest Mean	sd	Posttest Mean	sd	z	N
Functional ability/task	13.93	2.5	13.70	2.8	.56	15
Linguistic skills	12.10	3.1	12.67	3.6	1.42	15
Imitation	53.57	12.3	53.25	10.8	.34	15

* p < .05

Measurement Characteristics

With regard to the reliability of semi-direct tests of oral proficiency, test content variation is not a problem, but the assignment of consistent ratings is a concern (Clark & Clifford, 1988). Therefore, inter-rater reliability estimates for the task section of the RTE were calculated along three dimensions: the two versions (A and B) of the test, the two times at which the test was administered (pretest and posttest), and the two scales on which students were rated (functional ability/task and linguistic skills). The eight resulting intra-class correlation coefficients ranged from .93 to .98. These high figures were undoubtedly achieved by our close attention to consistent initial ratings of the samples and by the periodic scoring checks we undertook (on this point see Clark & Clifford, 1988). Internal consistency of the RTE itself was measured by alpha coefficients for the task section. The estimates for the two versions of the test (A and B) were .96 and .97 (pretest) and .98 and .95 (posttest). The KR-21 reliability estimates for imitation total ratings were .94 (pretest) and .88 (posttest).

With respect to content validity, we feel that since the rhetorical tasks were selected, in part, to replicate the rhetorical organization patterns covered in the courses, it can be assumed that the instrument exhibits a fair degree of content validity. This could be tested by having independent experts make judgments as to the degree of match between the RTE criteria and the content being measured.

The predictive capacity of the RTE has not been fully explored because the sample size was not sufficient to permit multiple regression analysis, the procedure of choice for this type of research question. Instead, correlations of the pretest measures,[6] shown in Table 5, can be considered preliminary information for answering questions about predictive validity.

		TABLE 5			
	Pearson Correlations of Pretest Measures				
	ESLPETOT	PREFA	PRELS	PREFSI	PREIMIT
ESLPETOT*	1.000				
PREFA**	.410	1.000			
PRELS***	.367	.729	1.000		
PREFSI****	.357	.573	.904	1.000	
PREIMIT*****	.412	.452	.654	.690	1.000

$p < .01$ for all correlations
*ESLPE total score; **Functional/Ability task; ***Linguistic skills; ****FSI-Adapted; *****Imitation

Some interesting trends present themselves in Table 5. One is the relatively low correlation between any of the measures on the RTE and the ESLPE total score. The correlations range from .36 to .41, meaning that since none of these measures alone accounts for more than about 16% of the variance in the placement exam's scores, none alone would be a good predictor of a student's ESLPE score. In any case, the RTE was not designed to predict overall language proficiency (which is what the ESLPE purports to measure), but specifically oral proficiency.

Another result seen in Table 5 is the fairly high correlation between the linguistic skills ratings and the functional ability/task ratings ($r = .73$), which means that one measure accounts for 53% of the variance in the other. This correlation suggests that some, but not all, information is shared by the two measures.

Finally, tentative validation of our linguistic skills rating scale is shown by its high correlation with the FSI-adapted scale ($r = .90$), a result which indicates that the two scales share 81% variance. In addition, ratings from the linguistic skills scale show fairly high correlations with the individual FSI-adapted scale areas: fluency, $r = .85$; grammar, $r = .76$; pronunciation, $r = .81$; vocabulary, $r = .77$.

DISCUSSION

To review our findings, we found that the Rhetorical Task Examination, in general, gave results parallel to those of the ESLPE. It could be expected that 33A (low-intermediate) students would be rated lower than either 33B or 33C students (high-intermediate and

advanced, respectively), but it is not immediately clear why the 33B (and not the 33C) students received the highest functional ability/task ratings. Perhaps there was something unique about this 33B class; on the other hand, further test administrations might prove this occurrence to have been nothing more than a statistical aberration. In any case, class membership did not prove to be strongly related to ratings on the pretest measures; clearly, other factors were at work. Perhaps the answer could be found in a future analysis of demographic data (e.g., sex, major, native language, length of stay in U.S.). Another interesting question is whether placement decisions would have been the same regardless of the measure used, if both the ESLPE and the RTE had been given simultaneously.

Secondly, the ESL 33A students made significant gains in oral skills, as measured by the RTE, during ten weeks of instruction, while ESL 33B students did not show comparable gains. It is tempting to say that this was because, in contrast to the 33A course, oral skills are not routinely stressed in the 33B course, but there are other plausible explanations. One such explanation is that since the 33A students took the posttest as a part of the final exam, it is likely that they had high motivation to do well (perhaps higher than the 33B students). The 33B students, on the other hand, knew that their posttest performance had no bearing on their grades, and thus this motivation may not have existed for them. Another possibility is that lower level students (33A) are more likely to make gains that can be detected statistically than are higher level (33B) students. Unfortunately, the absence of the 33C students at the time of the posttest limits our interpretation of the inter-class differences in achievement. What *is* interesting about Tables 3 and 4 is the relative equivalence (in terms of speaking ability) of 33A and 33B students at the end of the quarter, as can be seen by examining the pretest and posttest ratings. However, whether the gains 33A students made were due to instruction, maturation, or other uncontrolled factors cannot be ascertained from this study.

Finally, evidence has been provided to suggest that the RTE is promising in terms of its measurement characteristics. Not only was very high interrater reliability obtained for both rating scales, the test showed high internal consistency as well. A fairly strong relationship between functional ability/task and linguistic skills ratings was also found, but this could be because for each tape both ratings were assigned at the same time. While even a higher correlation between the two measures might suggest that the

functional ability/task scale alone could be used to focus on *how* each task was accomplished, we would opt for continuing to use both scales, since, for reasons discussed in this paper, we feel it is not intuitively practical to combine both scales into one. Finally, the very strong relationship between the linguistic skills rating scale and a third, FSI-adapted, scale suggests that our linguistic skills scale, which measures four linguistic skills (fluency, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary) as a group, appears to be an efficient way to assess linguistic performance.

CONCLUSION

Our primary motivation for developing the Rhetorical Task Examination was to create a practical and efficient method of assessing oral proficiency. Consideration was given to the concept of language as a complex system. Rhetorical tasks were designed so as to allow students flexibility in communicating real information and in expressing their own perspectives. Rating scales were created which looked first, and most importantly, at nonnative speakers' ability to communicate this information in a cohesive and comprehensible manner, and second, at the linguistic skills which enabled them to do this. Such an approach tried to take into account the idea that language is more than grammatical accuracy; that it is a *system* of many levels with holistic goals--communication and self-expression. Thus, the RTE tried not to isolate form from function (although both were rated separately), and the important goals of expediency and practicality were kept in mind.

In addition, the RTE (with its achievement test function) was intended to look at the *process* of language learning for students enrolled in the low-intermediate course (33A). The tasks in the test thus parallel the rhetorical patterns introduced, analyzed, and practiced by students throughout this course. However, though students made gains on the posttest as compared to the pretest, questions still remain as to why this was so: Were the instructional activities effective; did they assist students in figuring out the structures used and the components of these various modes? Would measurable gains in functional and linguistic ability have occurred anyway because of exposure to the language in environments both outside and inside the academic setting?

Several limitations of this project should be mentioned. For one, since problems can occur from teacher and researcher

expectations when the teachers, testers, raters, and researchers are the same people, we are therefore cautious in interpreting our results. Secondly, since intact classes of non-randomly selected students were used to answer our questions, it is unwise to generalize our results to other situations. Finally, while we feel that the RTE is promising in terms of reliability, validity, and practicality, it fails to tap a fundamental feature of oral proficiency: the ability to interact with interlocuters. This is a crucial difference between semi-direct tests, as ours is, and oral interviews, a difference which explains the broad appeal of interview-type testing.

A final point, made by Byrnes (1987), is that the ultimate goal of oral testing is to go beyond product assessments to process recommendations for materials and curriculum development. The product assessments made by the RTE have been described in detail in this paper, but it is worth mentioning briefly the other uses to which the RTE and the data obtained from it have been put. Since this project began, we have routinely used the test as a diagnostic instrument in many of the courses we have taught at UCLA. A useful follow-up activity for the classroom is to have students transcribe various rhetorical tasks from their tapes and then analyze their speech for phonological, lexical, grammatical, and/or discourse features. We have also had students generate written texts from the test prompts, which, in conjunction with their spoken texts, were used as a basis for discovering differences between spoken and written discourse. Related to this pedagogical activity was a larger project in which the comparison-contrast task was used as a prompt for eliciting spoken and written data from both native and non-native speakers. The resulting texts generated a database, parts of which have been used for various language analysis projects (e.g., Lazaraton, forthcoming; Riggenbach, 1989; Turner, 1989). We hope, therefore, that others with an interest in oral proficiency test development will benefit from our experience with the Rhetorical Task Examination itself and with its broader applications to the field of applied linguistics.

NOTES

[1]We would like to thank Brian Lynch, Fred Davidson, Evelyn Hatch, and various anonymous reviewers for their informative responses to earlier versions of this paper as well as Donna Brinton and Grant Henning for their assistance in implementing this project. Any errors that remain are our own.

[2]In brief, the ESLPE of 1986, composed of 150 items, had five subtests: listening, reading, grammar, vocabulary, writing error detection, and a composition task. Evidence of the reliability of this version of the ESLPE is

available in terms of internal consistency estimates such as the KR-21 which was .944 for the Fall 1986 administration, with a mean of 102.9 and a standard deviation of 22.34 ($N = 798$; $k = 150$); in terms of norm-referenced reliability, correlational and regression analyses with the TOEFL suggest that the ESLPE is a valid measure (Lynch, 1985).

[3]For complete copies of the oral skills test and the rating scales described in this paper, write to:

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[4]According to Henning (1987), equivalent tests must show three characteristics: a) equivalent mean scores, b) equivalent variances, and c) equivalent covariances (or equivalent correlations with a third measure).   An ANOVA procedure with Bartlett-Box F for equality of variance was used to check assumptions a) and b) for both the task section ratings (linguistic skills rating + functional ability rating) and the imitation section ratings.   For the task section, $F (1,51) = .882$, n.s.; Bartlett-Box $F = 1.004$, n.s.   For the imitation section, $F (1,51) = 1.54$, n.s.; Bartlett-Box $F = .153$, n.s.   Assumption c) was not met.   The two test forms showed differing correlations with the ESLPE: imitation section, $r = .26$ and $r = .53$; task section, $r = .29$ and $r = .50$ for Forms A and B, respectively.

[5]This nonparametric test was selected instead of the more conventional parametric ANOVA procedure because we are not convinced that the research design used or the data collected in this study allow us to meet the assumptions of Analysis of Variance (e.g., normal distribution of data, equal variances, interval-level measurement).   Furthermore, the study needs to be replicated before sufficient evidence can be obtained to support the utility and measurement adequacy of the instrument.   Therefore, various nonparametric procedures (Wilcoxon Matched-Signs Ranked-Pairs Test, Ryan's procedure, eta^2 strength of association) will be reported.   See Hatch & Lazaraton, (1991) for a thorough discussion of these and other procedures.

[6]Strictly speaking, parametric Pearson correlations may be inappropriate for these data, given the concerns voiced above.   However, a nonparametric Spearman rho rank-order correlation matrix showed correlations which were virtually identical to the Pearson coefficients.   Since Pearson correlations are more easily interpreted than Spearman coefficients, the former are reported.

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APPENDIX   A

EXAMPLE A
Prompt for Opinion Task

Some people believe that all high school students in every country should be required to learn at least one foreign language. What do you think?

You will have 15 seconds to think about whether or not you agree with this statement, and why (or why not). Then you will have one minute to tell us your opinion. Please be sure to give reasons for your opinion.

[directions given aurally (on audiotape) and in writing (in test booklet)]

EXAMPLE B
Prompt for Comparison-Contrast Task

You all know or have heard something about the way Christmas is celebrated in the U.S. Think of a major holiday in your country, and then compare and contrast this holiday with the Christmas holiday as it is celebrated in the U.S.

You will have 30 seconds to think about your answer. Then you will have one and a half minutes to answer the question.

[directions given aurally (on audiotape) and in writing (in test booklet)]

APPENDIX B
NARRATIVE TASK RATING SCALE

Functional ability/task rating

4   Task requirements: a) General orientation to characters and setting clear. b) Steps in story ordered and cohesive--natural, appropriate use of transition signals. c) Finishes story and/or concludes it appropriately. d) Some mention of personal attributes of characters and/or their emotional state.

3   May finish story but at least 1 task requirement is lacking.

2   Doesn't finish story and/or doesn't perform up to 2 of the task requirements.

1   Description of steps or pictures only with little attempt at connecting these as a "story"--2 or more of the task requirements missing.

Linguistic skills rating

4   No unnatural pauses, almost effortless and smooth although still perceptively non-native. Always intelligible. Only occasional, minor errors in grammar. Pronunciation always intelligible. Use of language precise, appropriate to task. Vocabulary misuse is rare.

3   Fairly smooth and effortless delivery. Few unnatural pauses. Grammatical errors are usually minor; don't interfere with overall intelligibility. Accent foreign, but rarely interferes with comprehension. Occasional misuse of vocabulary words, but clear and intelligible with little hesitation.

2   Occasionally halting and fragmentary, some unnatural pauses. Problems with basic grammatical constructions may sometimes interfere with intelligibility. May sometimes be hard to understand due to pronunciation problems. Limited vocabulary requires hesitation and circumlocution. Simple terms may be used, but these are usually adequate for task.

1   Very halting and fragmentary, many unnatural pauses. Little grammatical or syntactical control except in simple structures. Interferes with intelligibility and with apparent ability to complete task. Often hard to understand due to pronunciation problems. Vocabulary limited or inadequate for accomplishing tasks.

APPENDIX C
FSI-ADAPTED SCALE*

Fluency General criteria: Over smoothness, continuity and naturalness of speech (as oppos. to pause for rephrasing sentences, groping for words and so forth).

5   Speech is almost effortless and smooth although still perceptively nonnative. No unnatural pauses.

4   Fairly smooth and effortless. Speech is occasionally hesitant but these unnatural pauses are rare.

3   Speech is occasionally halting and fragmentary. Some unnatural pauses.

2   Speech is slow and uneven except for short or routine sentences. Many unnatural pauses.

1   Speech is so halting and fragmentary that delivery is extremely labored. Strongly affects intelligibility of speech.

Grammar General criteria: Appropriateness of grammatical constructions to task. Intelligibility due to grammatical correctness or incorrectness of utterances.

5   Only occasional, minor errors with no patterns of failure. Always intelligible, constructions used are appropriate to task.

4   Occasional errors showing imperfect control of some patterns but no weakness that causes misunderstanding.

3   Some errors which show a lack of control with some major patterns. Causes occasional misunderstanding.

2   Frequent errors showing control of very few major patterns. Causes frequent problems with intelligibility.

1   Very little grammatical or syntactical control except in the simplest structures. Interferes with intelligibility and with apparent ability to complete task.

Pronunciation General criteria: Overall comprehensibility/intelligibility. Phonemic accuracy, "natural" intonation.

5   No conspicuous mispronunciations, but would not be taken for a native speaker. Intonation "natural."

4   Marked "foreign accent" and occasional mispronunciations which do not interfere with understanding.

3   "Foreign accent" may require some concentrated listening. Mispronunciations lead to occasional misunderstanding.

2   Frequent serious errors require concentrated listening. Very "heavy" accent leads to misunderstandings.

1   Pronunciation frequently unintelligible.

Vocabulary General criteria: Appropriateness of choice of words as opposed to a too-simple or inadequate vocabulary according to task requirements.

5   Use of language broad and precise, words always appropriate for task. Vocabulary adequate to cope with more difficult concepts.

4   Misuse of vocabulary words is rare but may occur. Usually clear and intelligible with little hesitation.

3   Choice of words sometimes inaccurate; simple terms are primarily used. Some evidence of hesitation and circumlocution due to limited vocabulary.

2   Vocabulary limited and choice of words often inaccurate. Clear evidence of circumlocution and hesitation, affects performance on task completion.

1   Vocabulary very limited and usually inadequate for accomplishing tasks.

(adapted from an FSI supplemental rating scale: Educational Testing Service, 1970; reprinted in Oller, 1979, pp. 321-323)

*Results claimed in this article using an adaptation of an ETS testing instrument should in no way be construed as confirming or denying the validity of the original test on which it was based, or as possessing any validity of the original test.

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The Intelligibility of Three Nonnative English-Speaking Teaching Assistants: An Analysis of Student-Reported Communication Breakdowns[1]

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The intelligibility of nonnative English-speaking teaching assistants (NNSTAs) is an issue that concerns researchers, administrators, teacher-trainers, and undergraduates. Based primarily on the work by Smith & Nelson (1985), this paper offers a novel method of looking at intelligibility--first recording undergraduates' immediate feedback on communication breakdowns while watching three NNSTA presentations, then following with an analysis of those communication breakdowns by a group of ESL specialists. The analysis in this study yielded a taxonomy of factors affecting the intelligibility of the NNSTAs. This study also found pronunciation to be the main cause of unintelligibility in the three NNSTA presentations, whether in isolation or in combination with vocabulary misuse, nonnative speech flow, or poor clarity of speech, a finding which confirms students' perceptions of the language problems of NNSTAs reported by Hinofotis & Bailey (1981) and by Rubin & Smith (1989).

INTRODUCTION

Nonnative English-speaking teaching assistants (NNSTAs) have become an important focus of attention for ESL teachers in the last ten years as protests by both undergraduate students and the general academic community against the poor language proficiency of some NNSTAs have prompted responses from institutions and individual researchers alike. An increasing number of universities (e.g., Columbia University, Purdue University, and the University of California campuses in Berkeley, Los Angeles, and San Diego) have taken measures to improve the quality of TA selection by requiring prospective NNSTAs to take an oral proficiency test. The tests used range in format from an informal interview to standard tests of spoken English, such as the Test of Spoken English (TSE) or the Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit (SPEAK). Many

institutions also provide pre-service orientation programs for new NNSTAs, which offer intercultural and pedagogical training as a complement to language instruction. Such programs vary in length from a one-day workshop at the University of California in Los Angeles, to a four- or five-day program at Michigan State University and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and even three-week or longer courses at the Universities of Wyoming and Minnesota. In addition, most of these universities offer in-service training programs concurrently with the NNSTA's teaching assignment, which include oral skills courses, seminars with an emphasis on pedagogy and cultural issues, classroom observations and feedback, and individual consultation (Constantinides, 1989).

Researchers, on the other hand, have been trying to improve their understanding of the situation by investigating the NNSTA problem from various perspectives. Bailey (1984a), who studied the communicative competence of NNSTAs in relation to that of native speaking TAs, was able to develop a TA typology based on the factors which characterize successful teaching in the classroom. A study by Rounds (1987) looked at NNSTA discourse in the classroom to define discipline-specific discourse which is communicatively competent. Some researchers have also addressed the NNSTA issue from the students' perspective. Hinofotis & Bailey (1981) researched the reactions of American undergraduates to the communicative skills of prospective NNSTAs in order to identify which areas of NNSTA discourse were perceived as problematic by the students. More recently, Brown (1988) studied the attitudes of undergraduate students toward one NNSTA and found significant differences depending on what ethnicity, professional status, or language background the NNSTA had been assigned. Similarly, Rubin & Smith (1989) found that accent, ethnicity, and lecture topic have a significant effect on undergraduates' perceptions of NNSTAs.

Analyzing NNSTA discourse, assessing NNSTAs' oral proficiency in English, and measuring students' attitudes towards NNSTAs are certainly valid and necessary approaches to understanding the NNSTA problem. However, there is also a need to determine the extent of the problem in actual communication terms; i.e., investigators need to know where communiation breaks down and how much comprehension is actually taking place in NNSTA-student interaction. In this respect, Bailey (1984b), Smith & Nelson (1985), and Brown (1988) have recognized the importance of intelligibility in the communication process and have stressed the

need for further studies on intelligibility in NNSTA-student interaction.

Smith & Nelson (1985) define intelligibility and distinguish it from comprehensibility and interpretability in a way that is fitting to the present study:

> a) *Intelligibiliy*:   word/utterance recognition; a word/utterance is considered to be unintelligible when the listener is unable to make it out and, thus, to repeat it.
> b) *Comprehensibility*:   word/utterance meaning (locutionary force); word/utterance is said to be incomprehensible when the listener can repeat it (i.e., recognizes it) but is unable to understand its meaning in the context in which it appears.
> c) *Interpretability*: meaning behind word/utterance (illocutionary force); a word/utterance is said to be uninterpretable when the listener recognizes it, but is unable to understand the speaker's intentions behind it (i.e., what the speaker is trying to say).
> (Smith & Nelson, 1985, pp. 334-336).

Since, for Smith & Nelson, intelligibility results from the interaction between speaker and listener, unless the listener's perspective is taken into account in the study of NNSTA intelligibility, the researcher will not be able to fully understand how the intelligibility process works in NNSTA-student interactions. The current study was thus undertaken to provide a better understanding of the intelligibility of NNSTAs who have language problems.

Research Questions

Five research questions were asked in relation to NNSTA intelligibility:

1) How often does communication break down in the NNSTA presentations under study?
2) What proportion of the communication breakdowns is due to a lack of intelligibility, as compared to a lack of either comprehensibility or interpretability (see definitions above)?.

3) What factors seem most frequently to cause a lack of intelligibility in the communication breakdowns reported by the students?
4) How does the intelligibility level of the NNSTAs--as reported by the students--relate to the NNSTAs' oral proficiency in English?
5) How suitable is the methodology devised for the study of NNSTA intelligibility?

METHOD

Subjects

Three nonnative English-speaking graduate students were selected on a voluntary basis: Subject 1 (K), from Korea; Subject 2 (I), from Italy; and Subject 3 (H), from India. The subjects were in the fields of economics, mathematics, and computer science, respectively (I shall use the initials of the subjects' native language-- Korean, Italian, and Hindi--to protect their indentities and facilitate the reader's recognition). K and H were already TAs at the time the data were collected, whereas I, the only female subject, was a research assistant and a prospective TA, though she had had prior teaching experience both in her native country and in the U.S. That the three NNSTA subjects speak different native languages and specialize in different disciplines is regarded as an advantage rather than a problem for this exploratory study whose findings are meant to serve as pointers to future research rather than be conclusive.

Procedures and Instruments

The three NNSTAs took the UCLA Oral Proficiency Test (OPT), a twenty-minute discipline-specific test designed in 1988 at UCLA by the TA Training Department of the Office of Instructional Development to assess the oral skills of prospective NNSTAs. The OPT is conducted in an interview format which has the examinee perform a variety of tasks, such as reading aloud, conveying a set of written instructions and giving a prepared presentation to an undergraduate who may ask questions, and conversing informally with the test administrator. Each testing session is videotaped for rating purposes. Two trained raters (ESL specialists) rate each test in seven categories using a performance scale with scores ranging from

zero to four (see Appendix A). The results are averaged for each category and rater, and a report is sent to the examinee's department with an oral proficiency diagnosis and recommendations for further coursework when appropriate. The present study focuses only on Section 4 of the OPT, the prepared presentation.

For the first part of the study, 31 native English-speaking undergraduate students (eight freshmen, five sophomores, nine juniors, and nine seniors) volunteered to watch each of the three videotaped NNSTA presentations (Section 4 of the OPT) in the investigator's presence, one student at a time. Each student was instructed to stop the videotape every time communication broke down, i.e., whenever he/she failed to understand the speaker. The students were also asked to identify the word or utterance they had not understood and which they thought had caused the communication breakdown. These sessions with the students were taperecorded for future reference.

For the second part of the study, six ESL specialists, all of them holders of M.A. degrees and experienced teachers of oral proficiency, were selected to watch the three videotaped presentations as a group in the presence of the investigator. Having previously identified and marked on the presentation transcripts[2] every instance of commmunication breakdown reported by the students, the investigator showed each presentation to the specialists, stopping the tape after each one of the reported communication breakdowns. The specialists' task was to categorize and describe each breakdown using two sets of linguistic categories which I have called 'General Types of Communication Breakdown' (Set 1) and 'Specific Causal Factors' (Set 2) as follows:

Set 1: General Types of Communication Breakdown (see definitions above)[3]
a) Intelligibility
b) Comprehensibility
c) Interpretability

Set 2: Specific Causal Factors[4]
a) Pronunciation: sounds, stress and intonation
b) Grammar
c) Flow of speech- hesitation, pausing
d) Volume: loudness
e) Vocabulary: lexicon
f) Organization: cohesion, discourse structure

g) Clarity of speech: overall easiness to follow talk
h) Other

A norming session in which the two sets of categories were explained and tried out by the raters preceded the rating session.

The first set of categories was used to isolate communication breakdowns caused by lack of intelligibility from those caused by either of the two other categories, while the second set was meant to characterize communication breakdowns in linguistic terms. The six ESL specialists were instructed to select at least one category from each set to describe every communication breakdown reported by the students, bearing in mind that some of the categories partially overlapped and that they could occur simultaneously. The specialists were also allowed to comment on the adequacy of the categories selected and to add new ones whenever appropriate. In addition, the ESL specialists were asked to rate each presenter's oral proficiency in English on a scale ranging from one (poor) to nine (excellent) and to state whether or not they considered the presenter's English good enough to be a TA.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section first reports some general findings about the NNSTA presentations, then reports and discusses the results of the study for each of the five research questions posed (see above).

TABLE 1
Descriptive Information about NNSTA Presentations

TAs	Field	Presentation Length (mins., secs.)	Total No. of Words	No. of Words per Minute
K (L1=Korean)	Economics	5' 20"	490	91.91
I (L1=Italian)	Mathematics	4' 00"	362	90.50
H (L1=Hindi)	Computer Science	4' 20"	713	164.66

As Table 1 illustrates, the three presentations varied in length and in total number of words[5], as is to be expected of data collected from subjects simulating an authentic task: The speakers' rate of delivery also varied, H's word-rate per minute being almost double that of K's and I's. Because occasional questions were asked by the student-listeners during the presentations, the word-per-minute ratio is actually lower than it would be if listener's talk-time were factored out. However, listener talk-time was very similar for each of the three presentations.

The students' total and average number of stops per NNSTA presentation and the distribution of stops per number of words are shown in Table 2:

TABLE 2
Students' Stops of Videotape
N=31

TAs	1 word stops	2 word stops	3 word stops	4+ word stops	Total No. of stops	Average No. of stops	STD DEV	Avg. No. stops per 100 words
K	25	5	9	49	88	2.8	2.3	.57
%*	28.4	5.6	10.2	55.6	100			
I	56	0	0	6	62	2.0	1.3	.55
%	90.3	0	0	9.6	100			
H	27	25	7	13	72	2.3	1.8	.32
%	37.5	34.7	9.7	18.0	100			
TOT.	108	30	16	68	222			
%	48.6	13.5	7.2	30.6	100			

*percentages rounded to one decimal place

For example, during K's presentation, the students stopped the videotape because of a breakdown in communication a total of 88 times; They also reported that in 49 of those instances--the highest percentage of the three presenters for that category (55.6%)--the breakdowns had been caused by a sequence of four of more words. During I's presentation, on the other hand, there were a total of 62 stops, of which 56 were caused by single words--the highest percentage of the three presenters for that category (90.3%).

Table 3 reports the number of cases of communication breakdown and the frequency of students who stopped the videotape for each case (also referred to as 'stops'):

TABLE 3
Cases of Communication Breakdown
N=31

TA	1	2	3-8	9-14	15-19	20-24	Total	Average No. of cases per 100 words
K	32	9	4	1	0	0	46	9.1
I	6	1	3	0	1	1	12	3.3
H	12	5	7	2	0	0	26	3.6
TOT	50	15	14	3	1	1	84	

The following is an example of how to read this table: During K's presentation, there were 32 different cases in which only one student stopped the videotape because of a lack of understanding; during I's presentation, in contrast, there was one case (the word "catheti") which caused between 20 and 24 students to stop the videotape. As can be seen in the table, K and H exhibit a similar distribution of communication breakdowns, loading on the lower end of the scale (32 and 12 one-stop cases respectively). I, on the contrary, is the only presenter with any cases (two) for which 15 or more students stopped the videotape.

Question 1: *How often does communication break down in the NNSTA presentations under study?*

Taken together, the results presented in Tables 2 and 3 provide sufficient information to fully describe the distribution and frequency of communication breakdowns in the three NNSTA presentations under study. Table 2 shows that students indicated a breakdown in communication (i.e., they stopped the videotape) an average of 2 to 2.8 times per presentation. However, while some students did not stop the videotape at all, others stopped it well above the group average, the actual range of stops per student for all three presenters being 0-17. The high values of the standard deviations are indicative of such variation, though they suggest that there is a floor effect in the data, i.e., that it accumulates at the lower end of the

range, producing a positively skewed distribution. This floor effect appears to indicate that students had different levels of tolerance for foreign accents, some having had an easier time understanding the presenters than others (a number of students pointed this out after watching the presentations). In addition, it can be assumed that some students could handle ambiguity better than others by making use of their background knowledge, whether of context or of visual clues. Attitude and students' perceptions of the presenters are other possible causes of miscommunication, but the influence of affect falls outside the scope of this study. Comparing the three presenters by estimating the average number of stops per one hundred words (Table 2, last column), it can be seen that H caused fewer communication breakdowns (.32) than either K (.57) or I (.55).

Nevertheless, the display of the total number of cases of communication breakdowns per presenter (K=46; I=12; H=26) in Table 3 seems to suggest that the students found I the easiest to understand, K the most difficult, and H somewhere in between. A fairer measure for comparison, however, the number of cases of communication breakdown per one hundred words (Table 3, last column) shows a different pattern: I and H have a similar number of cases while K has almost three times as many, indicating that the students may have found K more difficult to understand than either I or H who were equally comprehensible. I shall discuss this point further under Question 4 below.

Question 2: *What proportion of the communication breakdowns is due to a lack of intelligibility, as compared to a lack of either comprehensibility or interpretability?*

As can be seen in Table 4, the six ESL specialists thought lack of intelligibility to be the main cause (80.9%) of communication breakdown in the 84 total cases reported by the students (see Table 3) of which all but 3 cases were described by the raters as caused in part or wholly by a lack of intelligibility. Lack of comprehensibility and lack of interpretability accounted for only 15.3% and 3.7% of the cases respectively. The distribution of percentages across presenters follows a similar pattern:

TABLE 4
ESL Specialists' Descriptions of Communication
Breakdowns Using the Categories in Set 1
N=6

TAs	Intelligibility %	Comprehensibility %	Interpretability %	TOTAL* %
K	77.9	18.2	3.8	100
I	82.6	13.3	4.0	100
H	85.5	11.0	3.4	100
All TAs	80.9	15.3	3.7	100

*percentages rounded to one decimal place

In addition, for 13 of the 84 cases, there was overlapping of two classificatory categories, while, in two cases, all three categories were selected as possible causes of the communication breakdown. It should be pointed out that when a word or an utterance is partly or totally unintelligible, it may also be somewhat incomprehensible and uninterpretable, and thus some intelligibility problems may have overshadowed potential comprehensibility or interpretability problems.

To be included in the analysis, a category had to be agreed upon by at least two of the six specialists. A higher level of agreement was not required since, given the exploratory nature of this study, it was important to capture as much of the information provided by the specialists as possible. This procedure is in agreement with Krippendorff's (1980) who not only feels that it is a deceptive practice "to admit only those data to an investigation on which independent coders achieve perfect agreement" but also that "in a scientific inquiry, data must be chosen to be representative of a phenomenon of intent and not to suit the ends of a particular method" (p. 132).

A measure of interrater reliability is not provided because the binary nature of the data in the study--the specialists either selected or did not select a category of those supplied--does not lend itself to easy statistical analysis. Alternatively, I shall provide an indication of the percentage of agreement among the ESL specialists. Using the three categories in Set 1, all six specialists agreed in 30% of the cases analyzed, five or more agreed in 60% of the cases, and four or more agreed in 80% of the cases. For the categories in Set 2 (see below), the six specialists agreed in 60% of the cases, five or more agreed in 90% of the cases, and four or more agreed in 95% of the cases. The

lower agreement found for the categories in Set 1 reflects the difficulty in distinguishing between intelligibility and comprehensibility, a problem Smith & Nelson (1985) also report in their study.

Question 3: *What factors seem most frequently to cause a lack of intelligibility in the communication breakdowns reported by the students?*

In order to answer this question, only those cases reported by the raters as caused by lack of intelligibility were looked at in relation to the second set of categories proposed. As can be seen in Table 5, pronunciation is the factor present for more than 60% of the intelligibility-related stops analyzed for all 3 presenters:

TABLE 5
ESL Specialists' Descriptions of Intelligibility-Related Communication
Breakdowns (n=81) Using the Categories in Set 2
N=6

TAs	Pron. %	Gram. %	Flow %	Volume %	Vocab. %	Organ. %	Clarity %	Other* %
K	63.7	4.9	15.5	0.2	8.7	1.0	3.5	2.1
I	66.3	9.4	3.1	0.0	17.8	2.1	1.0	0.0
H	65.4	1.0	8.9	3.6	14.1	0.0	2.6	4.1
All TAs	64.6	4.4	11.7	1.2	11.6	0.9	2.9	2.4

*percentages have been rounded to one decimal place

Five of the six ESL specialists also specified whether stress or intonation (both included under pronunciation) were causing intelligibility problems. Their ratings (not shown here) indicate that 35.8% of all the pronunciation problems identified were due, wholly or in part, to stress errors, while intonation errors accounted for 4.5% of all the pronunciation problems. Table 5 also shows that to a much lesser extent, flow of speech and vocabulary each seem to account for over 10% of the communication breakdowns, but they were frequently listed by the raters in combination with other factors.
As a check-up procedure and in order to diminish the possibility of chance, a second analysis of the breakdowns was performed including only those cases in which three or more students had stopped the videotape (i.e., disregarding the cases in the first two

columns of Table 3), a total of 19 cases. The results can be seen in Table 6:

TABLE 6
ESL Specialists' Classification of Communication Breakdowns (n=19) Using the
Categories in Set 2 for all NNSTAs
N=6

	Pronunciation	Grammar	Flow	Vocabulary	Clarity	TOTAL
No. of Cases	107	4	16	41	13	181
%*	59.1	2.2	8.8	22.6	7.1	100

*percentages rounded to one decimal place

The results in Table 6 are similar to those in Table 5: pronunciation remains the most frequent category selected by the raters (59.1%). Indeed, pronunciation is a factor affecting lack of intelligibility in all 19 cases analyzed, whether on its own or in combination with other categories. Of the other four categories in Table 6, vocabulary doubled its value in comparison with the results in Table 5, flow of speech and grammar lost some of their value, and clarity more than doubled its value, reversing the order of factors apparent in Table 5.

Taken together, then, the results in Tables 5 and 6 indicate that in a taxonomy of all the possible factors interfering with the intelligibility of the three NNSTAs in the study, pronunciation is the overriding factor and vocabulary is a likely source of unintelligibility when it occurs in combination with pronunciation problems, while speech flow and clarity are occasional problematic factors, also when combined with pronunciation. It is questionable whether grammar should be included in the taxonomy because of its low value, but this negligible effect of grammar indicates, in part, the high grammatical accuracy of the presenters, as reflected in their individual OPT results (see Table 7 below).

Question 4: *How does the intelligibility level of the NNSTAs--as reported by the students--relate to the NNSTAs' oral proficiency in English?*

As can be seen in the OPT results (Table 7), all three NNSTAs appear to have the same pronunciation level (about 2.0),

which is described as "often faulty but intelligible with effort" (see Appendix A). In all other categories, however, H's scores are at least .5 higher than K's or I's, which indicates that on the whole H is a more proficient speaker of English than K or I.

TABLE 7
Oral Proficiency Test (OPT) Results

TAs	Pron.	Speech Flow	Grammar	Vocab.	Organiz	Listen. Comp.	Question Handling	TOTAL SCORE (max:28)
K	1.90	2.30	3.00	3.00	3.10	3.35	3.25	19.90
I	1.90	2.75	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.50	3.50	20.65
H	1.90	3.50	3.60	3.50	3.60	4.00	4.00	24.10

It may be that H's low score in pronunciation was caused by his high rate of speech, which was almost double that of K's and I's (see Table 1). Indeed, several students who had difficulty understanding H made mention of his fast rate of speech.

This noticeable difference in oral proficiency across presenters corresponds to the average number of communication breakdowns reported for each presenter by the students (see Table 2, last column) but not to the number of cases of communication breakdowns per one hundred words (see Table 3, last column)

To explain this change in pattern, we need to look at I's case more closely. As Table 3 indicates, there were two different words in I's presentation which were not understood by more than fifteen students each. These terms were "catheti" and "adjacent" (the first is a mathematical term in Italian, the second its English translation), with 24 and 18 student-reported communication breakdowns respectively. It was also these two words which accounted for most of the one-word stops reported for I's presentation in Table 2 and for 67.7% of all the communication breakdowns reported by the students during I's presentation.

The high index of unintelligibility caused by these two terms alone underscores the importance of technical vocabulary in NNSTA presentations. In I's case, her inability to use the appropriate technical vocabulary seems to be the one salient feature which made her unintelligible, since her accent does not appear to have been a problem for the students during the last one and a half minutes of her presentation (there were no student stops for the last third of I's presentation). In contrast, although the misuse of technical

vocabulary does not seem to have been as important a factor in K's and H's presentations, students had intelligibility problems with K and H throughout their presentations. Another measure of the NNSTAs' overall oral proficiency in English is reported in Table 8:

TABLE 8
ESL Specialists' Ratings of NNSTAs' Oral English Proficiency
Scale: 1 (poor) to 9 (excellent)
N=5

TAs	MEAN	STD DEV
K	4	.63
I	4.2	.74
H	6	.63

As can be seen, the ratings of five of the six ESL specialists (one misunderstood this section of the questionnaire) seem to correspond to the OPT scores (Table 7, last column) as well as to the average number of stops per one hundred words (Table 2, last column). In addition, of the six specialists five thought H was ready to be a TA, whereas only one thought I was ready, and none thought K was.

In summary, H appears to be a generally more proficient speaker of English than either I or K. In terms of intelligibility, however, while H is clearly better than K, in one measure (Table 2, last column) his intelligibility is superior to I's, whereas in another measure (Table 3, last column) it is similar. Although I's oral proficiency in English is similar to K's, the students seem to have found her more intelligible than K. A possible explanation for this could be the fact that I's native language, Italian, is closer to English than K's native language, Korean. It might be argued that another variable which could have affected intelligibility was the content of the presentations. However, students did not report this in their post-presentation comments. While it was not in the best interest of this small-scale study to control for such factors, it would seem reasonable to do so in future studies involving a larger sample of NNSTAs. For this study, however, there seems to be some relationship between student reported intelligibility and individual oral proficiency in English, for H appears to be both the most intelligible (Tables 2 & 3) and the most proficient (Tables 7 & 8) of the three NNSTA presenters.

Question 5: *How suitable is the methodology devised for the study of NNSTA intelligibility?*

Asking students to provide immediate feedback concerning the intelligibility of an NNSTA is a direct way of assessing the seriousness (frequency and importance) of communication breakdowns in NNSTA presentations. The technique can elicit information not easily obtainable through tests of oral proficiency and evaluation forms, for example. I's case is, once again, a case in point. While her oral proficiency level might lead us to believe that she and K are equally intelligible, the frequency and nature of her communication breakdowns seem to indicate that she is more intelligible than K. Such information can give TA trainers a better indication of which NNSTAs are ready to enter the classroom and which are not.

The knowledge gained from using this technique can also be applied to NNSTA training courses as well as to native-speaking student orientations by drawing the attention of both NNSTAs' and native-speaking students to the factors and words or utterance types most likely to cause communication breakdowns in NNSTA discourse. Addressing NNSTA language communication problems openly may not only have a positive effect on students' attitudes toward NNSTAs, it may make less cooperative students aware that the effort they put into understanding their NNSTA is also a determining factor for communication success.

It might be argued that the data collection technique used in this study (i.e., stopping the tape every time communication broke down) may have had some undesirable effects, such as depriving the listener of part of the context and preventing him/her from making optimal use of repetition, redundancy, and other useful contextual clues. An alternative approach could be to have students be exposed to an entire presentation without interruption and then be asked where communication had broken down for them. Since such a technique, however, would have brought in memory as a factor, some important information about either the process of understanding or particular instances of communication breakdowns would have doubtlessly been lost.

CONCLUSION

In this study, a group of native English-speaking undergraduate students was given the opportunity to point out to the investigator which words and utterances were actually causing communication breakdowns during three NNSTA presentations. Six ESL specialists then determined which of those communication breakdowns were caused by a lack of intelligibility. They also classified each instance of unintelligibility according to a set of linguistic factors. From this classification it was possible to infer a taxonomy of the factors which interfered with the intelligibility of the NNSTAs under study.

Of the factors identified, pronunciation proved to be the leading cause of unintelligibility in the NNSTA presentations. This finding confirms the results of student perceptions of problematic areas in NNSTA presentations reported by Hinofotis & Bailey (1981) and by Rubin & Smith (1989). In addition to pronunciation problems, vocabulary misuse or difficulty, non-native speech flow, and poor clarity of speech were also found to cause a decrease in intelligibility.

The small size and scope of this study must be kept in mind when considering the application of these findings. Certainly, a larger sample of NNSTAs would be required before generalizations could be made. Follow-up studies might also take into consideration aspects of intelligibility which this study was not designed to address. For example, a discourse analysis of the content and organizational structure of the NNSTA presentations might add valuable information concerning the nature of the communication breakdowns. In addition, it would seem appropriate to further explore the influence of academic discipline, ethnicity, and native language on the intelligibility of NNSTAs.

Notes

[1] Revised version of a paper presented at the 23rd Annual TESOL Convention, San Antonio, Texas, 1989.

[2] For reasons of space, the presentation transcripts have not been included here. The researcher will gladly provide copies of the transcripts upon request. Please write to: Juan Carlos Gallego, Department of TESL & Applied Linguistics, UCLA, 405 Hilgard Avenue, 3309 Rolfe Hall, Los Angeles, CA 90024-1531.

[3] From Smith & Nelson (1985).

[4] Based on Hinofotis, Bailey, & Stern (1981, p. 123).

5"Word" is interpreted here as a single, complete lexical item, such as "a," or "some," etc. Hesitation devices ("uh," "um," etc.) and incomplete words were not included in the analyses.

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SPEAKING PERFORMANCE SCALE FOR UCLA ORAL PROFICIENCY TEST FOR NONNATIVE TAs*

RATING	PRONUNCIATION	SPEECH FLOW	GRAMMAR	VOCABULARY	ORGANIZATION	LISTENING COMPREHENSION	QUESTION-HANDLING
4	rarely mispronounces	high degree of fluency; effortless; smooth	only occasional errors; no pattern; uses high level discourse structures	extensive, appropriate; precise to specific task; includes vocab. explanations to avoid talking over the heads of students	complete, clear, well-developed, logical explanations & discourse clearly marked; sufficient redundancy	appears to understand administrator and undergraduate completely	clear, not usually confused by questions; can clarify misunderstandings; no long delay in responding
3	accents may be foreign; never interferes; rarely disturbs NS**	speaks with facility; rarely has to grope; uses paraphrase & circumlocution easily	full range of basic structures; uses complex structures; mistakes sometimes occur but meaning accurately conveyed	adequate to cover specific task; occasional error with non-critical vocabular	clear explanation with sufficient detail some digressions but not overly redundant	adequate to follow most speech; occasional need for clarification or repetition	responds clearly; may hesitate while responding; may be confused by unclearly stated questions
2	often faulty but intelligible; accent may interfere or disturb NS	speaks with confidence but not facility; hesitant; some paraphrasing	meaning accurately expressed in simple sentences; complex grammar avoided	sufficient to speak simply with some circumlocution about the specific task	simple, clear explanation; transitions may be awkward; some lack of supporting examples; may lack necessary redundancy	OK in face-to-face communication of well-known subject mater; frequent need for clarification & explanation	has difficulty responding; unable to clarify unclearly stated questions

SPEAKING PERFORMANCE SCALE FOR UCLA ORAL PROFICIENCY TEST FOR NONNATIVE TAs*
(Continued)

RATING	PRONUNCIATION	SPEECH FLOW	GRAMMAR	VOCABULARY	ORGANIZATION	LISTENING COMPREHENSION	QUESTION-HANDLING
1	errors frequent; usually intelligible to NS used to dealing with NNS***	slow, strained except for routine expressions	errors frequent but intelligible to NS used to dealing with NNS	lacking in vocabulary necessary to perform the specific task	overall structure of explanation unclear; difficult to follow sequence & develoment of ideas.	some misunderstanding despite clarification & repetition	often confused by question; may answer illogically
0	unintelligible	so halting that conversation is impossible	non-existent	inadequate even for simple speech	impossible to follow explanation	inadequate even for simple face-to-face situations	may ignore questions; no strategies to clarify misunderstandings

EXCHANGE

Political Applied Linguistics and Postmodernism: Towards an Engagement of Similarity within Difference

A Reply to Pennycook

Barry Kanpol
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INTRODUCTION

It is hard to avoid the increasing influence that postmodern thought has had on most fields of human practice. From art to architecture, to dance, television, philosophy, education, politics, and now applied linguistics, postmodern vocabulary and consciousness seem to be materializing into a popular as well as an intellectual discourse.

In the opening article of the inaugural number of *Issues in Applied Linguistics*, Alastair Pennycook (1990) joins this dialogue by delineating assorted meanings of postmodernism. At the outset, I want to affirm that such efforts must be applauded. I, like Pennycook, am both appalled and horrified at the increasingly decrepit conditions of our society. As an educator, I take issue with many institutionalized norms and values, in part because I believe they are among the chief antecedents to the moral and spiritual predicaments of our times (Purpel, 1989). I, like Pennycook, believe that the pedagogical must be more political and the political more pedagogical.[1] Also, like Pennycook, I view the current discourse of modernist linguistics and applied linguistics as hegemonically trapped within a modernist objectification of language.

While I have no wish to undermine Pennycook's provocative and thoughtful article in any way, I do want to react to it on a number of levels. First, I will summarize what I like and dislike about Pennycook's article. I will also attempt to reconcile the modern/postmodern dialectic by sketching out some of the strengths of modernism and using them to bridge the strengths and

weaknesses of postmodernism. I will then further the modern/postmodern debate by developing a theory of "similarity within difference" (Kanpol, forthcoming [c]). In conclusion, I will situate this theory within the context of critical pedagogy[2] and the political and practical ramifications it can have for the field of applied linguistics. By doing so, I intend to add to Pennycook's basic argument, which began as a robust effort to politicize applied linguistics, but which fell short in its theoretical and practical formulations to do so.

Pennycook Revisited

Pennycook describes how aspects of applied linguistics are "children of the modernist era" (Pennycook, 1990, p. 10), an era in which, Pennycook cogently argues, language is standardized and objectified and in which a "correspondence theory which assumes a one-to-one correspondence between objects, words and thoughts" exists (p. 11). This modernist condition, contends Pennycook, focuses on both the structure of language and "the individual in cognitive isolation" (p. 12), yet concurrently omits language learning as a referent for a critique of political, historical power and unequal relationships in society.

Pennycook enunciates well the drawbacks of the positivistic methods of quantification in applied linguistics, though in response to these drawbacks, Pennycook asserts that qualitative research methods[3] can become part of a research agenda that situates language within what he calls a critical applied linguistics. Against the backdrop of this critique, Pennycook then posits his major thesis: that a *principled postmodernism* in applied linguistics which "retains a notion of the political and ethical" can be used to counter the hegemonic body of modernist applied linguistic knowledge (p. 17). To strengthen this counter-hegemonic stance, Pennycook cites examples of feminist and third-world critical literature that draw the reader closer to the kind of political and ethical condition Pennycook is headed towards.

After this review of more general critical theory, Pennycook's descriptions of "critical linguistics, sociolinguistics, ethnography and pedagogy" (pp. 23-35) are, taken together, a broad attempt to justify "principled postmodernism" as an emancipatory project needed to undermine the oppressive power relations both in

and out of the classroom. Finally, in his summary, Pennycook succinctly lays the foundation for what a "principled postmodernism" might look like in a discourse of critical applied linguistics.

I find two major weaknesses in Pennycook's article. First, Pennycook has failed to enunciate the positive aspects of modernism. Such an omission weakens his theoretical (and political) position for a critical applied linguistics, while a truly "principled postmodernism" might have considered some of the favorable aspects of modernism and the negative aspects of postmodernism. Second, Pennycook did not attempt to generate a practical agenda to connect with his grand theory. In the following, I respond to these two weaknesses.

The Best of Modernism Reconciled with Postmodernism

Anticipating later theoretical arguments in this paper, it will be helpful, first, to lay out the basic configurations of both modernism and postmodernism. In its best and often most radical progressive sense, modernism envisages the hope of enlightenment, a commitment to community (Habermas, 1981) through individual reason and reflection, a unity of the individual and society in an ongoing dialectical vision of individual betterment, social progress, human emancipation, and human possibility. Political modernism provides a discourse for "the possibility of developing social relations in which the principles of liberty, justice, and equality provide the basis for democratic struggle" (Giroux, 1990, p. 6). In all fairness, the utopian dreams of modernity are not unworthy and not unlike the dreams of postmodern critics. Indeed, pivotal to both modernism and postmodernism is the idea that the emancipatory possibilities of pluralism and heterogeneity become the basis for both new and struggled for meanings.

Central to the current debate on postmodernism's attack on universal reason, but with a similar "modern" quest for emancipation and liberation, is the ongoing dialogue of what counts as 'difference'.[4] Differences, according to Giroux (1990), are "historically constructed within ideologies and material practices that connect race, class and gender within webbed connections of domination" (p. 8). For the postmodernist, differences are situated within narrative accounts and varying dialects. To deconstruct

differences means redrawing the maps of personal and social history, while concurrently pragmatizing and sensitizing the everyday actions and language of social actors to race, class, and gender struggles.

Within this postmodern condition of "difference," the locus of power shifts from the privileged, the powerful, and those who control, to those struggling groups of people (females and minorities) who seek a measure of control over their own lives. Women's studies in the field of education (e.g., Weiler, 1987; Grumet, 1988) exhibit signs of this postmodern dialogue. The female narrative voice constitutes a discourse that considers difference as one of the vital links to a notion of schools as sites both of gender struggle and of transformative and liberating responses to the hegemonic conditions (in this particular case, patriarchal influences on social relations) of our times.

The major strength of current theories of postmodernism discourse is the potential for infinite deconstruction of meaning. Yet, quite ironically, this strength has also become a weakness: it seems that what is lost within the infinite deconstruction of meaning is *shared* meaning. What could be seen as central to the discourse of difference and disharmony as a referent for critique and advancing emancipatory possibilities is the notion of identity within solidarity, unity, and commonality. Moore (1990) puts it well, I believe, when she comments on Nicholson (1990):

> In the politics of identity there is a mindless celebration of difference as though differences, whether race or gender, operated equally. Everyone knows, surely, that some differences are more different than others. (p. 41)

Gitlin (1990) agrees with Moore, furthering her argument by situating difference in the context of a more radical political dialogue:

> America today, along with its Left, suffers from an exhalation of difference--as if commonality were not also a value. While the Left brandishes the rainbow or the quilt, the Right wraps itself in the flag of "common culture" . . . Functionally, the Left has limited itself to those who think of themselves as members of one or another tribe . . . On what common ground do we (Left) meet to cooperate? (p. 48)

With Gitlin's notion of "common ground" in mind, I argue that the deconstruction of difference and identity by postmodernists (including both educational postmodernists and, for our purposes here, Pennycook) has not allowed for the exploration of similarities of struggle, affirmation, and hope that lead to notions of community, identity, and their interrelatedness. Also missing is a notion of solidarity of difference and/or commonality of difference that connects people to common democratic struggles in an effort to end subordination.[5] To further the modern/postmodern debate, a theory is needed to interrelate "common ground" and "difference."

Similarity within Difference: The Other

One way to bridge the modern and postmodern debate *without* seeking closure for ultimate truth is to theorize about similarity within differences. To do so would allow educators to empathize and better understand marginalized peoples. At the base of anyone's difference, I argue, lie the similarities of oppression, pain, and feelings, albeit in different forms.   For instance, all immigrants share similar experiences.   Some immigrants are hegemonized by a patriarchal father and subservient mother. Other immigrants may live as minorities in foreign countries, illiterate in the dominant language. Some immigrants assimilate into a new culture better than others. Many share a low socio-economic status and the drudgery of alienating work. Yet, there is no reason why I as an educator cannot empathize with marginalized peoples though I could never meet them all. Given my own life experiences, I can identify with those who have felt alienation and certain forms of suffering and oppression, even though our respective particular circumstances may have differed.

What is sorely lacking within postmodern literature, then, (including Pennycook's article) is attention to both a theory and politics of similarity within difference and a politics of identity "that highlights questions of equality, justice and liberty as part of an ongoing democratic struggle" (Giroux, 1990, p. 13) in which race and ethnicity become the "center of a radical politics of democracy differences and cultural struggle" (Giroux, 1990, p. 3).

Central to a politics of similarity within difference is empathizing with the other,[6] an "other" which can be used

interchangeably to mean marginalized peoples or the empathetic incorporation of the attitudes and values of the community one teaches in. To empathize with either of these forms of "other" is to transcend one's own view of what counts as correct culture, and, instead, understand, incorporate, and change oneself within the other culture for a common, intersubjective, emancipatory purpose.

To understand and empathize with the "other" becomes a postmodern challenge which assumes different forms within different areas of popular culture, such as cinema, art, dance, and theatre (Giroux & Simon, 1988, 1989). No less important for postmodernists is to connect the struggle and resistance of different groups to a theory that highlights commonality, community, and sharing. While the identity of struggles could first be viewed as bound within their discursive difference in place, time, and meaning, they are also connected by their commonality--possibly as an attempt to end alienation, oppression, and subordination.

Practical examples from qualitative research on teachers in the field of education may help clarify similar, yet concurrently different, struggles (Kanpol, 1988, 1989, 1990, forthcoming [a], [b], [c], [d]). The differences of these teachers' struggles have involved power relationships with administrations, gender and race struggles, and continual battles to use teacher-generated pragmatic curricula rather than officially mandated ones. Yet, the similarities of these struggles have revolved around teachers challenging dehumanizing rating scales, alienating accountability schemes, rigid rule structures, uncreative "teacher-proof" standardized curricula, and authoritarian on-site management. Both in and out of class, teachers in these studies found ways to challenge dominant ideological propensities, such as rampant individualism and negative competition.[7] Such teacher challenges to dominant values had at their base the commonality of a democratic discourse that deconstructed difference yet seriously considered similarities. Indeed, these cultural and value-based struggles represented the *politicizing of schools* in and out of the classroom in the most practical sense. Educational researchers (e.g., Willis, 1977; Apple, 1986; Fine, 1988; Ellsworth, 1989; McLaren, 1989) provide a context for viewing the practical and ideological struggles of male and female students as well as the practical and ideological struggles of teachers within issues of curriculum development and implementation, race, class, and sex. What is suggested in these studies is a dialectic of modernist and postmodernist theoretical discourse that seeks to politicize schools by revealing how power

and authority as well as similarity and difference are negotiated in practice.

Similarity within Difference as Applied to Critical Applied Linguistics

As a response to what I consider to be the first major weakness in Pennycook's article, I have suggested in essence that "critical applied linguistics" become even *more* political and emancipatory in its theorizing than Pennycook's call for a "principled postmodernism": that we consider similarities within difference as an *extension* of a theory of postmodern applied linguistics concerned merely with the politics and ethics of difference. In response to the second major weakness of Pennycook's article, I want to suggest a practical agenda for ESL teachers and critical applied linguists, which necessitates seriously considering the use of critical pedagogy as a teaching tool.

At this point I must mention some surprise at Pennycook for overlooking the work of the leading critical pedagogue of our times, Paulo Freire (1974, 1985), as a reference for a political agenda in critical applied linguistics. Freire's associations with peasant workers led him to conclude that language cannot be separated from social and political conditions. He thus sought to promote the cultural transformation of the peasants by revising their critical consciousness and engaging them in a struggle against oppressive social structures. In order to help achieve this goal, Freire linked peasants' vocabulary, ideas, and values to their lives. Interestingly, these peasant struggles, while individually different, were bound by their commonality to end their alienation, oppression, and subordination. In the spirit of Freire, what I am about to offer is not a prescription of "what to do on Monday morning" or how, but, rather, a principled, political, practical, and "Freirian" account of what a theory of similarities within difference might look like in real classroom situations.

In a recently completed naturalistic study (Kanpol, forthcoming [c], [d]) in a school where the student population was 82% Hispanic, four of the five teachers studied were English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers. Interestingly, their pedagogical strategies were directly linked to the kind of postmodernism that I have been theorizing about, for within their pedagogy, community,

difference, and similarity were celebrated. This orientation became, whether consciously or unconsciously, these teachers' critical pedagogy. Before I highlight these points with three examples, I ask the reader to keep two thoughts in mind. First, the following examples revolve around teacher-student interaction in some form. Second, these examples connect the positive traits of modernism-- community, reflection and human possibility--with the postmodern challenge to both accept and understand difference.

1. Use of Text to Recall History

In one ESL class, a short story, "The Lady or the Tiger" (Stockton, 1980), was used as the basis for a vocabulary, comprehension, and structured grammar lesson. But the story was also used to generate discussion about individual choice, freedom, and the question "what is right?" The Egyptian ESL teacher began the class by recounting her history: her entrance and the hardships she faced as an immigrant to the United States. She then encouraged discussion on individual differences and choice in each student's life. Yet the students' differences were combined with similarity when the text was introduced as a depiction of the dilemmas faced by everyone when confronted with free choice. The result was that a sense of community grew out of similarity within differences. While the ESL language-teaching context was important to this teacher, it was clearly an enterprise secondary to the more pressing issues of developing political awareness about choice, freedom, and right in student's minds.

2. Use of Film to Question Stereotypes

In another ESL class, a teacher who had previously lived in Mexico for three years showed her students a Spanish-language film with English subtitles.[8] The film was used for vocabulary practice and discussion, but, more typically, to develop communicative competence. The hidden curriculum[9] of the lesson involved making the students aware of the plot in which the stereotypic macho and patriarchal father uses all his guile to woo his daughter into sexual submission. When she refuses, he locks her up in an attic in their house without access to food or water. The film ends with the daughter denying her father's advances and dying of starvation in

his arms. The ensuing discussion in class revolved around the issues of stereotype and rightness, among other matters. Interestingly, 75% of this class were males. Some admitted that the macho image of males in their households was not much different from that depicted in the film. Others admitted that in their families men were not like the father in the film. It was clear that the students had had different male and female experiences, yet had shared similar confrontations with sexual stereotypes. The teacher eventually revealed her intent to challenge students' stereotypes, and in the context of this ESL lesson students *were* challenged, through their own similarities and differences, to question and reflect on hegemonic thought processes concerning family ties and sexual roles.

3. Cooperative Learning as a Challenge to Individualism: A Move to Individuality

In a third ESL class, a teacher facilitated language games, puzzles, and exercises with synonyms and antonyms in the context of cooperative learning situations, a pedagogy used, unconsciously I believe, as a form of resistance to individualism. Beyond the English language learned, this teacher downplayed individual testing and excessive competition among students by basing a student's worth on individual and group effort rather than on such dehumanizing criteria as numerical achievement. Students learned to accept individual differences within groups yet responded as a team on issues of vocabulary choice. As tolerance became the denominator of similarity for individual members of groups, despite individual student differences, typical student competition for high grades was deemphasized. Such challenges to dominant ideological propensities can occur (though not always) within the context of "cooperative language learning," and did occur within the context of similarity (tolerance, team effort, sharing) and difference (individual likes and dislikes).

The above examples suggest that the ESL lesson does not only serve a language-teaching purpose but consciously or unconsciously can challenge dominant ideological assumptions. As a theorist/researcher in the social foundations of education, what interests me most in these *practical* examples of similarity within difference are the particular social and political implications which make up the classroom agenda, less so the facilitation of mere

language learning and use. On a more *theoretical* tack, to separate modernism and postmodernism as oppositional, mutually exclusive theoretical formulations simply reinforces division and antagonism among academics (Ellsworth, 1989). Instead, we should search for modernistic similarities within postmodern differences, which in their joint formulation consider multiple realities (containing modern and postmodern aspects) that open up dialogue for any community to flourish, whether in or out of academe.

CONCLUSION

In short, the deconstruction of language with similarities and differences at its core can become an intersubjective, counter-hegemonic, postmodern, political, and applied linguistic project to end oppression. Teachers at all levels of education have the power not only to help students assimilate into the mainstream culture; they can also use "assimilation" as a social and political tool to transform consciousness by bringing into focus the similarities within differences.

The political and practical stances within schools that derive from the heavy theoretical formulations that Pennycook and I have proposed in our dialogue would be manifested by such actions as teachers both questioning and changing the tracking system of ESL students; teachers questioning and redesigning mainstream and gate-keeping exams; teachers taking a stand to choose a curriculum devoid of sexual and racial bias; teachers being better informed about state decision-making which affects all these matters; teachers actively partaking in union activities to improve working conditions. Only when these sorts of issues are acted upon can a truly critical applied linguistics within a postmodernism project become a theoretical referent and a political tool to challenge mainstream consciousness, epistemological certainty, and ideological tentativeness. Only then may the possibility of emancipatory practice be realized as a celebration of differences and a fundamental coming together in union and solidarity over similarities.

Notes

¹For more on the pedagogical and political, see Aronowitz & Giroux's (1985) discussion on the transformative intellectual. For Aronowitz & Giroux, *political* refers specifically to the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes (or cultural capital) that transpires between teachers and students. This is the sense of my use of the word 'political' throughout this manuscript.

²Critical pedagogy is used as a teaching strategy to question and be critical of dominant cultural values and power relations such as excess competition, individualism, racism, and sexism. Within this pedagogy, students are encouraged to reflect on their own experiences as they relate to these dominant values. The intent is to help emancipate students from dogmatic to liberating forms of thinking on these issues.

³Pennycook fails to elaborate on the various methods of qualitative research. For instance, ethnomethodology and symbolic interactionism would surely be a large part of qualitative research and could also be used to illuminate the drawbacks of positivistic applied linguistics. The issue of what *kind* of qualitative research should be used for a critical applied linguistics is an important issue not treated by Pennycook.

⁴A deconstruction of 'difference' is an ongoing debate among philosophers (Derrida, 1986; Wood, 1987).

⁵Due to space limitations, I have avoided a discussion of the democratic nature of struggle. In my upcoming book, I deal with these issues in far greater depth (Kanpol, forthcoming [c]). For further discussion on democratic struggle, see Laclau & Mouffe (1985), Laclau (1988), and Mouffe (1988). The nature of this struggle is intimately connected to intersubjective conditions of existence. For an excellent discussion on intersubjectivity, see Dallmayr (1981), especially Chapter 2.

⁶Pennycook sporadically refers to the "other" without elaborating how this "other" has its own voice, language, history, etc.

⁷Negative competition can be compared to positive competition. The latter implies competition without conflict, conforming to rules in a context in which the goals for everyone are just. Negative competition creates disharmony (conflict) among group members since the goals for everyone are discriminatory and unfair. For more, see Rich (1988). Rampant individualism in this context refers to the quest for general human supremacy with the goal of domination in mind. Individualism is the opposite of individuality, the prizing of individual talent. For more on this, see Dallmayr (1981, pp. 2-9).

⁸*Delgadina* [film], Audio Post Production, Russian Hill Recording.

⁹The "hidden curriculum" refers to implicit, moral, and ideological assumptions routinely passed on to students. In its strongest and least emancipatory sense, the hidden curriculum refers to the hegemonic body of knowledge that places students in subordinate social positions. For more, see Anyon (1980, 1981).

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REVIEWS

Content-Based Second Language Instruction by Donna M. Brinton, Marguerite Ann Snow, and Marjorie Bingham Wesche. New York: Newbury House, 1989.

Reviewed by
John Clegg
Ealing College of Higher Education

Why is it necessary to talk about "content-based language teaching?" One of the main things people do with language is express propositions about the world. Language is normally used to talk or write about things, and in educational contexts it is often *about* bodies of knowledge. How is it possible, then, to teach language which is *about* nothing in particular? Alas, as we all know, "contentless" language teaching is all too common. It has been a long struggle to establish the idea of "meaningful communication" within the major traditions of foreign language teaching; and even within these communicative traditions, what students are asked to talk *about* is still not as important to teachers and materials writers as *why* they should communicate and *how* they should form their utterances. In most foreign language teaching, content is just not a primary determinant of syllabus design in the way that function and structure are.

This is not to say that content-based language teaching does not exist. As the authors of *Content-Based Second Language Instruction* point out, it has its vigorous traditions: some communicative general-purpose EFL work--especially at post-intermediate level--has a content-led syllabus; domain knowledge is also a central component in much of ESP. More interestingly, from the educational point of view, *second* language learning for children in nursery, primary, and secondary education, whose home language is not the medium of instruction, is in the U.K. and many other parts of the world becoming content-led. As the education of ethnolinguistic minority pupils is relocated from withdrawal classes

to the mainstream classroom, ESL is no longer language teaching; its concerns are the development in the child's second language of those cognitive abilities needed to come to grips with the curriculum. This focus is very remote from the structural or functional syllabus. In a similar way, immersion education in Canada has not paid much attention to language syllabuses and the traditional methodological accoutrements of foreign language teaching; and this is often true--as we in the West are all too inclined to forget--of every context in the world where primary, secondary, and tertiary education are conducted through the medium of a second or third language.

Finally, of course, the teaching of second languages for academic purposes (which I will refer to, however reluctantly, as SLAP) can also be content-based, and this is largely what this book is about. It discusses how we should teach second language students the language they need to study academic content subjects in tertiary education. The authors present three solutions to the language and content problem in the context of teaching languages for academic purposes: "theme-based language instruction"--a topic-led version of communicative language teaching; "sheltered content instruction"--content teaching by content specialists, delivered (with the concomitant interactional adjustments) to non-native speakers; and "adjunct language instruction"--a linking of content and language courses, the latter being taught by language specialists to second language learners, the former by content specialists to a mix of both native and nonnative speakers.

Each of these three models is presented through examples. Theme-based language instruction is described, in an ESL context, at UCLA (ESL adults attending evening English classes) and, in an EFL context, at the Free University of Berlin (German university students learning undergraduate English). Sheltered content instruction is exemplified by the University of Ottawa, which offers sheltered instruction in, for example, psychology to students studying through either French or English as a second language. Adjunct language instruction is represented by the UCLA Freshman Summer Program, in which ESL freshmen follow linked ESL and content courses. A case study in the development of a content-based program is also presented through the example of a course at the Social Science English Language Center in Beijing. The three models are discussed in some detail with relation to such features as materials, methodology, staffing, logistics, evaluation, and appropriacy to context. A good deal of space (about a third of the book) is taken up by examples of content-based materials from

adjunct-type courses, and there is also a detailed consideration of evaluation in content-based courses with sample assessment tasks.

The authors take the view that since a fair amount of language teaching goes on but not much is written about it, their book fills this gap. They also see these forms of teaching as interesting in terms both of second language acquisition and of general developments in language in education. In these respects I believe they are right. SLAP teaching exists in a multiplicity of forms and badly needs the kind of conceptualizing framework which this book offers. The book also fills our need for detailed documentation of high-quality SLAP operations, such as those the authors describe. Furthermore, a good deal of this sort of teaching is often poorly funded, poorly staffed, and poorly understood. This book, in contrast, shows that when it is done well, content-based language instruction is pedagogically and administratively a sophisticated endeavor. Moreover, since the book is rich in detailed samples of materials, it should prove to be a gold mine of purely practical ideas for teachers who support second language students in content areas.

The issue I would like to raise, however, is one which, to be fair to the authors, this book does not set out to discuss: is content-based language instruction the whole answer to the educational needs of second language learners? Should we not be looking instead--or at least in addition--at the way teaching is conceived of for all students in higher education? Is the link between language and content a language learner's problem, or is it more fundamentally an institutional problem?

Like anyone concerned with the relationship between language and content, the authors are constantly faced with the question of whether these two things are divisible. On this issue teachers in general tend to fall easily into what I will call "separatist" and "integrationist" camps. The separatist majority see themselves as "content teachers": from pre-school to tertiary education (but increasingly as we ascend this scale), they describe curricula in terms of domain knowledge; yet they regard the language and learning processes which are the medium for acquiring this knowledge as separable from it, and they consider the pedagogical skills needed to facilitate these processes to be the responsibility of another teacher. In the integrationist camp are the minority who believe that we construct our knowledge of a domain by engaging with it in ways which highlight not the transmission of facts but the development of cognitive and communicative processes: take care

of these language and learning processes, they believe, and content knowledge will take care of itself. In this view, there is no such thing as a "content" teacher; the way to teach "subjects" is to take full responsibility for preparing our learners to meet the language and learning demands which the subject domain makes on them.

Higher education tends to be a stronghold of the separatist camp, for its conventions encourage teachers to concentrate much more on *what* students learn than on *how* they learn it. In the favored loci of this process, such as the lecture or the seminar, learning is cognitively demanding: it takes place in the absence of many of the cognitive props which normally situate learning in a context and a culture in everyday life and in the earlier years of schooling. In higher education, learning is thus particularly difficult for second language users, but it is also difficult for everyone.

How do the specific insights of this book bear on this more general learning issue? Second language teachers working in content areas understand that, at least as far as second language acquisition is concerned, language and content go together. The authors are properly unambiguous on this point: "The focus for students is on acquiring information via the second language and, in the process, developing their academic language skills" (p. 2). They also show how these processes can develop only within a certain facilitating environment, of which they demonstrate three types. All three possess certain characteristics: one is that the content curriculum should determine the language uses which are learned; another is (especially in sheltered programs) that input and interactional adjustments to academic discourse are necessary to help second language users acquire both language and content together; a third (especially in the adjunct model) is that a repertoire of support activities is required to make salient for the second language user certain of the key discourse features and skills needed for academic language use. SLAP teachers prefer to locate their work on the boundaries of the mainstream curriculum--neither wholly within nor wholly outside it--where they can work within the content program but at the same time apply the facilitating influence of their expertise. The authors thus place their three models at different points on a continuum which bridges the gap between language class and content class. In this view SLAP does indeed provide "shelter" for second language learners while they prepare themselves for the harsher climate of the mainstream classroom.

Insofar as the difficulties of second language learners in post-secondary education derive from incomplete language ability,

then the solutions presented in this book are an articulate and sophisticated account of the kinds of good language teaching practice which ought to become more widespread. If, however, as I suggest, what second language students are up against is just as much a question of backward pedagogical traditions right across this sector of education, then the insights of SLAP teachers should be taken up by the mainstream curriculum and used to the benefit of all. Anyone who has worked in SLAP knows that a pedagogical environment which is facilitative in terms of second language acquisition tends also to be facilitative in terms of ordinary cognitive development. Take for instance what second language acquisition theory tells us about the features of a good SLA environment: contextualized input, communicative need, opportunity to negotiate meaning, opportunity to initiate interactions, freedom from stress, order in the learning process, and so on. Consider also the rich variety of learning procedures--amply demonstrated in this book-- which teachers of SLAP regularly inculcate: note-taking, researching sources, editing, academic reading, organization of written discourse, interaction in academic contexts--in short, the whole gamut of study skills. Very little of all this is exclusive to second language learning; most of it is basic to good learning in general. It is also the recurrent experience of teachers of SLAP that a good content teacher is often also a facilitative teacher of second language learners; that when second language students find a teacher difficult to understand, he is probably a strain on native-speaker students too; that good SLAP materials are often just what native-speaker students need; and that a SLAP teacher who influences a mainstream teacher to alter her style of teaching is probably doing *all* the students a favor.

It is, however, a classical predicament of content-based language teachers that their work leaves mainstream pedagogical traditions largely intact. Although they take an integrationist view of the relationship between language and content, the realities of institutional traditions in which they work often limit them to providing language-supportive environments on the sidelines of the mainstream university classroom and inhibit them from extending their pedagogical influence further across the tertiary curriculum to the benefit of the sector as a whole. Nevertheless, within these constraints they have considerable pedagogical achievements to their credit, as this book testifies. But the ways forward will require them to become even more integrationist and to admit not only that content-based language teaching is good for second language

students, but that language-facilitative content teaching is better for everybody.

How then can teachers of languages for academic purposes shift their concerns into the mainstream of higher education? Essentially they must ask more questions. This book provides satisfying answers to one question: How can language teachers construct environments in which second language learners can learn language through content? But here the authors stop. We ought to, however, go further, and thus a second question must be: Which other teachers in the institution can provide similar environments? The carefully constructed context provided by the SLAP teacher is only one of a multiplicity of facilitative language and learning environments which any educational institution offers. Moreover, although this specific environment is necessary for many non-native speakers, not all will need it. Indeed some, even with limited ability in the language of instruction, will be able to learn adequately in many other language-sensitive mainstream classrooms in departments across the institution. A third question therefore also presents itself: What characterizes a mainstream classroom in which second language learners can flourish? The answer has to do with both subject and teaching style. Some curricular domains, as proponents of sheltered teaching know, are capable of being taught in a style which is less linguistically demanding and more contextually supportive than others; the natural sciences are a good example. Some teachers adopt a style which combines facilitative teacher-talk, opportunities for task-focused small-group work, visual support, support for academic reading and writing, and overall orderliness in the teaching process. Some teachers, moreover, are more open than others to the needs of second language learners. Once we locate these classrooms, we can get more second language students more quickly into mainstream learning.

A final, and fundamental question is: How can the institution as a whole become more aware of learning as a process and the role of language within it? Many different interest groups concern themselves with this question and will provide natural allies of content-based language teachers in the search for answers. What is important, then, is that we should try increasingly to see the problems faced by second language learners as one manifestation of larger educational issues: one is that teachers do not have a clear enough understanding of learning and especially of the role of language as a part of learning; another is that learning tends to be

seen more as the transmission of content as one progresses through the secondary and tertiary sectors. Unlike in cognitive science and the study of education, the practical traditions of post-secondary education do not sufficiently recognize that discourse processes seem to go hand in hand with cognitive processes. As long as this is so, learning will continue to be more difficult than it need be for all learners, but especially for second language learners.

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Linguistics in a Systemic Perspective edited by James D. Benson, Michael J. Cummings, and William S. Greaves. Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1988. x + 441 pp. Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science, Series IV, Current Issues in Linguistic Theory. General Editor: E.F. Konrad Koerner.

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This collection of thirteen articles illustrates how a diverse range of linguistic interests and concerns (intonation, grammar and lexis, semantics, lexicography, discourse and semiotics, anthropology and artificial intelligence) are handled within the theoretical approach known as systemic functional linguistics, largely based on the work of M.A.K. Halliday. Readers unfamiliar with systemic linguistics but with a fair knowledge of transformational generative theory will find here quite a different view of language. It is beyond both the scope of this review and the ability of this reviewer to conduct an in-depth comparison between systemic linguistics, on the one hand, and transformational generative theory, which has largely been concerned with sentences rather than with texts and text/context relations, on the other. However, an attempt will be made to highlight some of the ways in

which systemic linguistics differs from the more formal transformational generative linguistics, so as to contextualize the volume under review.

Halliday's work is considered to be the most important modern development within the so-called "London School" of linguistics, founded by J.R. Firth. Himself influenced by Bronislaw Malinowski in the 1930s, Firth believed that meaning-- the function of a linguistic item in its context of use--was paramount. In this Firth shared a similar interest with Bloomfield, a leading American structuralist: both viewed linguistic meaning in terms of the situations in which language is produced. They differed, however, in the consequences each drew from this view. For Bloomfield, the study of meaning thus had to be rejected as "unscientific," while for Firth, meaning became the cornerstone of linguistic theory.

Just as Firth's sociological orientation, derived from Malinowski, contrasts with Bloomfield's behaviorist, psychological bias, so does Halliday's work contrast with Chomsky's along a similar dimension. Halliday's primary interest has been in language as a central attribute of 'social man.' He views language in a functional sense, such that language is intimately part of the ways human beings negotiate and create meanings, build their perceptions of experience, and hence actually construct social reality. Central to this view of language is the notion of *options*, i.e., the choices which a speaker can exercise in the linguistic system to create different kinds of meanings. For instance, what transformational generative grammar would call the stylistically motivated optional fronting of the Complement, Halliday's grammar would explore as a choice between an unmarked and marked theme in the clause system, for which, once the choice is made, realization rules obligatorily translate that choice into the appropriate surface structure. For Halliday, therefore, choosing between a marked and an unmarked theme is just as important and meaningful as choosing between, for example, a declarative and an imperative clause.

Most reactions, whether positive or negative, to systemic linguistics have, unfortunately, come from systemicists themselves. By and large, non-systemic linguists have little to say about this approach. This state of affairs may have evolved from within, for many systemic linguists have preferred to pursue their own path and remain aloof from debates between the more philosophically inclined and the more anthropologically oriented schools of linguistics. The wide range of interests represented in the volume under review

suggests that the time may have come for systemicists to take note of the strengths of other traditions and bridge the gaps between them and systemic theory as well as within systemic theory itself.

One major criticism of the Hallidayan systemic approach is the lack of relevant data in its theorization (Berry, 1982; Butler, 1985). Most of the chapters in this volume, however, are data-based studies. To mention a few, Martin, in a comparison of English and Tagalog, re-examines Whorf's notion of the cryptotype and elegantly shows how each set of general categories in Tagalog grammar functions as a metaphor for one of the Tagalog cultural themes of family, face, and fate. This fascinating study seeks to understand grammatical patterns in terms of the underlying principles of human communicative interaction. In another study, Gregory draws data from recipes and political pamphlets to explain how knowledge is encoded and decoded in different social contexts. His finding that the process type is predominantly Material in the clauses of recipe texts but overwhelmingly Mental in political texts shows how a text both affects and is affected by an ongoing situation.[1] Threadgold's article directly addresses Halliday's (1978) notion of language as a social semiotic by analyzing how the meaning of Milton's Satan was recoded by the English romantics in terms of intertextuality and heteroglossia. Threadgold demonstrates how any text is guided by the "intertextual" domains which it presupposes. In a similar yet different vein, Steiner examines two different semiotic systems, language and music, and investigates the kinds of meanings which are realized and the ways in which the two systems interact to create the texture (linguistic and musical) of a performed ballad.

Systemic linguistics has been largely known for its contribution to the description of written discourse, while its role in the analysis of spoken discourse is rarely acknowledged. Yet, in the very beginning of this book, El-Menoufy counters this reputation with his study of intonation and meaning in speech, based on an analysis of four hours of spontaneous conversation among speakers of southern British English. Indeed, within the systemic model (Halliday, 1970; Greaves, 1989), the meanings of intonation contrasts have always appeared in the semantic feature description of an utterance together with the meanings of non-intonational (i.e., grammatical and lexical) contrasts, while the phonological patterns themselves appear as the formal elements that realize these meanings. This system makes it possible to integrate contrasts such as tone contrasts, as they are realized directly in the phonology. The

advantage of the systemic model becomes particularly clear in comparison with the attempts made by some transformational grammarians to integrate intonational contrasts in their linguistic description (e.g., Stockwell, 1972). Also dealing with spoken discourse is Sinclair, who uses the Birmingham Collection of English Texts in his study of the correlation between the sense of words and their transitivity type. Connected with the notion of lexical cohesion (Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Hasan, 1984), which led to an increased interest in how the configurations of words and phrases reflect cohesive options as well as how conceptual content forms a coherent continuity of meanings, Sinclair's study explores the relation between lexis and grammar, a relation which he calls "the main lexical preoccupation of systemics" (p. 73).

The most critical challenge for systemicists has come, perhaps, from the methodological rigor which is characteristic of the formalist approaches to language. Halliday (1978) has said that it is important to "interpret language not as a set of rules but as a resource" (Halliday, 1978, pp. 191-2). His idea appears to be that rules and other formal procedures, such as hypothesis testing, are inappropriate for describing how language is used. Yet, in this collection, several authors demonstrate that there is no clash between a more precise and rigorous research methodology and the desire to account for language use.

A good example is Butler's empirical study of the relationship between politeness and the semantics of modalized directives in English. Butler first formulates hypotheses regarding the relationship between semantic features and the acceptability, speech act classification, and politeness of various modalized forms. Then he devises an informant testing procedure to obtain evidence that supports or disconfirms the hypotheses. Based on his results, he then formulates the relationship between acceptability and speech act classification, the effects of semantic force on politeness, and the effect of modals on politeness. In the conclusion, he compares his own study with those of others. A similar demand to be open to falsification and modification of research claims is taken seriously into consideration in Davies' analysis of how surface grammar realizes different metafunctional meanings, Fawcett's evaluation of alternative networks for personal pronouns by distinguishing the level of form from the level of semantics, and Matthiessen's illustration of how the semantic and lexico-grammatical levels are related in a computerized text-generation system.

This review would not be complete without mentioning the article written by Halliday himself, "On the Ineffability of Grammatical Categories," in which he calls attention to the limitations on the ability of language to interpret itself. Based upon observations and claims of both European linguists (such as the Prague School and the British linguists) and North American anthropological linguists (such as Whorf and Boas), as well as evidence from English and non-Western languages (such as Hopi and Chinese), child language, and text generation in the framework of artificial intelligence, Halliday argues that the grammatical category is ineffable. One of his examples is the category of "plural": the term "plural" is the name of a relationship between that category and the speaker's experience of the world, but at the same time it is also used as the name of the grammatical category which realizes this relationship (e.g., a noun can be said to be "plural" in number). The fact that "I like cats" is preferred to "I like more than one cat" shows that the meaning of the -s on "cats" is impossible to gloss except by means of itself. Hence the ineffability of the category "plural." This notion leads Halliday to invert Chomsky's famous dictum and describe language as "an infinite system that generates only a finite body of text" (p. 40). This philosophical article certainly challenges some of the underlying notions of linguistics. However, given the editors' objective to "show systemicists at work" rather than to "offer a review of the 'state of the art'" (p. ix), it is somewhat difficult to see how this article fits in with the rest of the collection.

Still, while this collection of articles is wide-ranging in focus, the content is rich, and the level of inquiry is deep. The volume clearly shows us the remarkable applicability of systemic linguistics to many issues of language use. This is not to say, however, that the articles are thus satisfactorily transparent and persuasive. One general question the book may raise for readers is whether semantics should be seen as the encoding of behavioral options in defined social contexts and settings or whether it should be viewed as having no connection to social behavior. This question is particularly relevant to the articles by Butler, Davies, Fawcett, and Matthiessen, but it is also relevant since any theory of meaning is a theory of communication. Indeed, because the concept of meaning poses a theoretical problem for linguistics, it also provides a potential source of criticism for any abstract model of language. For, in general, linguistic theory explains verbal communication in terms of an abstract system linking expression

and meaning. Yet to include all the communicational content of an utterance as part of its meaning would be considered by some linguists to be a confusion of "connotation" with "denotation," by others a confusion of "situational meaning" with "linguistic meaning," and by still others a confusion of "non-cognitive meaning" with "cognitive meaning."

Another issue is whether this book is readily accessible to readers who are unfamiliar with the systemic tradition. Halliday's work undoubtedly constitutes the core of systemic theory, yet there is also considerable diversity among practicing systemicists. In this collection, for example, while sharing with Halliday the importance and sociolinguistic concerns attached to semantics, Fawcett's model differs from Halliday's since it regards linguistics as a branch of cognitive psychology (much like Chomsky's framework) and because of the emphasis it places on explicitness. Such subtleties of similarity and difference among systemicists may confuse or be lost on some readers, especially since no guidance is given by the editors.

Nevertheless, *Linguistics in a Systemic Perspective* is an excellent resource for applied linguists for two reasons. Firstly, it is based on a linguistic theory which, because it builds into its very foundations such properties as a quest for meaning and a concern for context, naturally lends itself to application in various fields. Secondly, since it provides us with a closer look at a view of language and an approach to language analysis that go beyond the sentence level, it broadens our vision of what language is and how language is used.

Notes

[1] Halliday (1985) identifies three major types of process in English clauses: Type I, doing (material and behavioral); Type II, sensing/saying (mental and verbal); and Type III, being (relational and existential).

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Design for Cross-Cultural Learning by Mildred Sikkema and Agnes Niyekawa. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1987. 97 pp.

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As international travel and migration become more common and cultures that used to be geographically separated come into contact, intercultural education is receiving increased recognition, both in the academic world and in popular books such as Hall's (1976) *Beyond Culture*. Indeed, intercultural education teachers and teacher trainers have at their disposal several excellent curriculum guides and training manuals (e.g., Landis & Brislin, 1983; Seelye, 1984).

What distinguishes Mildred Sikkema and Agnes Niyekawa's *Design for Cross-Cultural Learning* from similar guides and manuals is its focus on the design of cross-cultural learning programs that "prepare students to function effectively in any culture or subculture and . . . help them grow toward becoming . . . more flexible and creative" (p. 7). A student in such a cross-cultural learning program is expected by the authors to become "not . . . a specialist in relation to a given culture but . . . a cross-culturally

flexible person who can understand and deal comfortably and effectively with people from different cultures" (p. 20). And the authors believe that programs based on their design can be instituted "anywhere in the educational process from high school through graduate and professional training, or, indeed, in cross-cultural training for adults outside formal educational contexts" (p. 1).

The book begins with two chapters on the psychology of cross-cultural learning. The authors argue that "learning how to learn another culture is a more important goal than learning the specifics of another culture" (p. 18). They believe that this sort of learning requires "learning to cope with ambiguities and experiencing the attendant culture shock" (p. 19). Sikkema & Niyekawa's cross-cultural learning program thus calls for maximization rather than minimization of culture shock. Following this conception of cross-cultural learning, students participating in their program would be told about the nature of cross-cultural learning in general but would have to find out for themselves--by trial and error--the do's and don't's of the particular culture they wish to acquire.

In Chapters 3, 4, and 5, Sikkema & Niyekawa describe the three stages of their program: a) a weekly pre-field seminar during the academic term prior to going abroad, b) the actual field experience of eight weeks in another culture (accompanied by a weekly on-site field seminar and the keeping of a daily journal), and c) a post-field weekly seminar which requires the submission of two written "learning summaries." The final chapter of the book is an analysis of the cultural learning that took place in an actual program based on Sikkema & Niyekawa's model, during which Hawaiian social work students from a "cosmopolitan mix of ethnic groups" (p. 44) spent eight weeks learning the culture of Guam.

Three appendices follow the short (60-page) main text of the book. Appendix A provides specific facts and figures for implementing the authors' design for cross-cultural learning, including the ideal student living arrangements (dormitories are recommended over family homestays); the qualifications of the two faculty members needed to conduct the pre-field, field and post-field seminars; the learning objectives; the course outline; suggested activities and readings; even the grading procedure and number of academic credits students should get for participating in the program (three for the pre-field seminar, four for the field experience, and three for the post-field seminar, a total of ten credits). Appendix B contains a selection of responses and comments made by the

Hawaiian students in the Guam program from their journal entries and field seminar. Appendix C offers suggestions for educators who wish to adapt Sikkema & Niyekawa's model to existing study abroad programs.

Design for Cross-Cultural Learning is, at first glance, an appealing book (ignoring minor problems like excessive repetition of the main points, insufficient variety in the examples, the absence of page numbers in the table of contents, the lack of an index, and an unorthodox citation system). Unlike most curriculum guides that arrive on the desks of educators, it contains a nice mix of theory and practice and calls for a healthy combination of cognitive and affective learning. Moreover, unlike most books on multicultural and intercultural education, it is not about how to teach students particular cultures in the classroom, but about how to get students to independently be able to learn other cultures.

It seems to me, however, that Sikkema & Niyekawa carry this laudable goal a little too far. For while some of the skills acquired in learning a second culture can facilitate the learning of other cultures in the future, to make this the sole aim of an intensive cross-cultural learning program would be a gross injustice to the efforts of both the students and the teachers, not to mention the "native speakers" of the second culture. A similar pedagogical focus would be making students take an intensive second language course not to learn the target language itself but to experience the process of language acquisition and become more adept at learning other languages in the future.

The authors are also unnecessarily rigid, I think, in their recommendations to educators wishing to use their learning design. Appendix A describes in excruciating detail what Sikkema & Niyekawa regard as the ideal cross-cultural learning program. On the other hand, Appendix C, aimed at those who wish to adapt their design to existing international education programs, is only 2 1/2 pages long and comes with a warning that programs the authors have seen that deviated from the basic design were "significantly weaker than those which followed this outline closely" (p. 95). Despite its brevity, however, Appendix C may be the most useful section of the book, since most American (and foreign) academic institutions are unlikely to send students abroad exclusively for cultural learning but may be willing to give greater recognition than they do now to the cultural component of their own study abroad programs.

All in all, *Design for Cross-Cultural Learning* is an interesting book which should prove useful to administrators and designers of both study abroad programs for American students and orientation programs for immigrants and foreign students in this country.   But the book should not, I feel, be used as the authoritative manual its authors evidently intend it to be. Rather, it can serve as a source of ideas for improving the cultural learning component of already existing international and intercultural education programs.   Language teachers wishing to incorporate "culture" into their language courses would be better advised to consult resources that address their needs more directly (e.g., Damen, 1987; Valdes, 1986).

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Designing Qualitative Research by Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1989. 175 pp.

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One of the more important issues cutting across the various subdisciplines of applied linguistics is the choice of research

paradigm. This choice has been discussed, primarily in the literature of education, sociology and psychology, in terms of quantitative research versus qualitative research. Each paradigm seems to be associated with specific research methods, but, more importantly, each is associated with a particular epistemological tradition. Quantitative research stems from positivism, which takes an objectivist perspective: reality is seen as independent of the mind, an external, objective entity waiting to be discovered through the use of rigorously controlled experimental design and appropriate statistical techniques. Qualitative research has its origins in interpretivism, which takes a relativist perspective: reality is seen as mind-dependent, with no externally existing foundation against which to measure or validate our knowledge claims.

Some researchers argue that the debate between the paradigms is no longer necessary or productive (Reichardt & Cook, 1979; Howe, 1988), while others claim the two perspectives are fundamentally incompatible (Smith & Heshusius, 1986; Smith, 1988). In applied linguistics literature, the issue of quantitative versus qualitative methods has occasionally been addressed, sometimes indirectly, by arguing for process evaluations (Long, 1984) or classroom centered research (Long, 1983); at other times more directly, by using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods (Beretta, 1986; Brown, 1989; Lynch, 1990). Nevertheless, in all of these cases, the possibility of the epistemological incompatibility of the two paradigms has not been addressed. In contrast, van Lier (1988) has argued that the important issue is not which methods to use--qualitative, quantitative, or both--but the need to be open to "different ways of arriving at understanding" (van Lier, 1988, p. 12), which is essentially an argument for the compatibility of the research paradigms.

Applied linguists who are at least opening up to the idea that qualitative research may offer some important insights to our inquiries will find Catherine Marshall and Gretchen Rossman's *Designing Qualitative Research* a useful book. Written as a "guide through the process of writing a qualitative research proposal" (p. 11), this book is organized around the sections of a traditional research proposal. The authors illustrate their points with "vignettes" from actual (occasionally fictitious) research proposed and conducted by the authors and other social scientists. Rather than offer a complete elaboration of qualitative research methodology, the authors state that their goal is "to give practical,

useful guidance for writing proposals that fit within the qualitative paradigm and that are successful" (p. 12). They acknowledge that in order to be successful with funding agencies and dissertation committees, qualitative research must be made acceptable to persons operating within a predominantly positivist, quantitative perspective. This concern with justifying qualitative research permeates the book and, at times, gives it a rather apologetic, defensive tone. Indeed, the final chapter is titled "Defending the Value and Logic of Qualitative Research." However, for people coming to this book from an applied linguistics backgound, this defensive stance is probably a realistic strategy to adopt given the dominance of the positivist perspective in our field.

The opening chapter of *Designing Qualitative Research* outlines the wide range of research traditions that fall within the qualitative paradigm, from ethnography to ecological psychology. Marshall & Rossman then point out the central difficulty in writing a qualitative research proposal: the need to present a clearly focused design for research that is inherently "messy," with its focus emerging from the act of carrying out the research. Their solution to this problem is to recommend that in support of the proposed research the qualitative researcher build a logical argument which demonstrates a focus by linking the specific research context to a larger body of theoretical issues and policy concerns.

Chapters 2 and 3 discuss the sections of the traditional research proposal: introduction, significance of the research, review of related literature, and research design and methods. While recognizing that a qualitative research proposal could take many different forms, the authors suggest adhering to the traditional outline "because it eases acceptance of qualitative studies and demonstrates their relationship to other approaches" (p. 43).

Chapter 2 discusses the building of a study's conceptual framework which includes the general research topic, the significance of the research, and the review of related literature. This framework is designed to give the proposal's audience a clear sense of what the study is about--what questions it seeks to answer, who will care about it and why, and how it relates to a larger body of issues and concerns. The authors also suggest including a section which states the research focus more precisely and offers "guiding hypotheses." The guiding hypotheses are proposed as "useful in communicating with more positivist researchers" (p. 44), but are presented as tentative and capable of being discarded or replaced as the research is conducted.

A majority of the pages in this book are devoted to Chapter 3 which presents a fairly detailed description of the proposal's design and methodology section. Just as with the statement of the research problem, there is a need to keep the research design flexible since qualitative research needs to have its design emerge, or evolve, as it is being conducted. The problem is similar to the dilemma of giving a sense of clear focus to the study while letting the focus emerge as the research unfolds: how do you keep the emergent character of qualitative research while at the same time having to convince the proposal audience that you know what you are doing? Marshall & Rossman suggest that the researcher clearly articulate the logic and appropriateness of the qualitative approach for the proposed research in the methodology section and include aspects of traditional, quantitative designs, while making it clear that the design may need to be modified during the course of data collection.

The bulk of the chapter delineates the methodological issues that must be addressed in the presentation of the actual research design: site and sample selection, researcher's role management, research strategies, data collection techniques, managing and recording data, data analysis strategies, and the management plan and feasibility analysis. In addition to defining each of these, the authors offer examples of how they are executed in qualitative research. Again, the vignettes play an important role, as they excellently exemplify the problems involved in gaining entry to the research setting and in dealing with ethical questions raised in ethnographic research.

Chapter 4 provides a useful discussion of projecting the time and resources needed for a qualitative study. The authors point out that it is this aspect of the proposal which demonstrates the competence of the researcher:

> Careful, detailed consideration of the resource demands of a study is critical in demonstrating that the researcher is knowledgeable about qualitative research, understands that the inherent flexibility will create resource difficulties at some point in the study, but has thought through the resource issues and recognizes the demands that will be made (p. 121).

Part of this chapter offers a vignette example which demonstrates how to indicate clearly the link between requested resources and research results.

Chapter 5 returns to the idea of providing a logical argument to support the use of qualitative research. Following the work of

Lincoln & Guba (1985), the authors suggest that qualitative research be judged against "criteria of soundness": the *credibility* of the study, its *transferability* to other contexts, its *dependability*, and its *confirmability*. These criteria essentially define the notions of reliability and validity from the qualitative perspective. The inappropriateness of the quantitative conceptualization of reliability and validity for qualitative research is also discussed. In particular, the traditional quantitative concern for reliability in the sense of *replicability* is seen as inappropriate for qualitative research inasmuch as the static, unchanging reality of the research setting assumed in the quantitative paradigm (with its associated "controls" over extraneous variables) is impossible in the qualitative context. Marshall & Rossman do, however, offer suggestions for addressing the concerns of replicability from a qualitative view, and they present methods for controlling researcher bias in qualitative studies.

It is hard not to want more than how to write a proposal from a book titled *Designing Qualitative Research,* although in certain sections, Marshall & Rossman do go beyond mere proposal writing, especially in the discussion of qualitative data collection techniques in Chapter 3. The detail they offer concerning specific techniques is uneven--observation is only discussed in terms of Patton's (1980) framework for the various roles an observer can play. Yet, one comes away with a useful introduction to the range of qualitative data collection activities. Similarly, while the authors note that data analysis strategies cannot be discussed in detail within the context of the research proposal, they do offer a reasonable summary of the most commonly used analytic techniques.

There are a few places where the discussion of data collection could benefit from some elaboration. For example, when discussing the interview technique (pp. 82-83), Marshall & Rossman seem to imply that observations are description while interviews are "fact". Yet it is interviews which are more likely to be affected by researcher bias. Why observations are less prone to researcher bias than interviews is not exactly made clear. A more productive way of presenting the use of both observation and interview would be as two different types of data sources, both of which can be used as a check on the other, both of which can fall prey to researcher bias.

Another area in need of elaboration is the presentation of Lincoln & Guba's (1985) constructs for addressing the issues of reliability and validity, in particular, the construct of *confirmability*. The authors claim that confirmability captures the traditional concept

of objectivity--a dangerous statement given that most qualitative researchers eschew objectivism. However, without an explanation of how "the findings of the study could be confirmed by another" (p. 147), this construct remains somewhat vague.

A final concern is the authors' many references to *generalizability* throughout the text (e.g., p. 56, p. 97). Generalizability is usually not a concern of qualitative researchers. Guba (1978) in fact questions the desirability, if not the possibility, of establishing generalizations, while Cronbach (1975) sees a generalization as nothing more than "a working hypothesis, not a conclusion" (p. 125). It may be that Marshall & Rossman's overt concern for making qualitative research palatable to persons from the quantitative perspective leads them out of the qualitative paradigm at times. The danger, as Smith & Heshusius (1986) point out, is in turning qualitative research into a methodological variant of quantitative research, but the authors do seem to recognize this danger when discussing Miles & Huberman's (1984) work (p. 115).

Despite these minor criticisms, *Designing Qualitative Research* has a great deal to offer. It clearly shows the integrative, multi-disciplinary nature of the literature pertaining to qualitative research and the resulting expansion of available research techniques. Given the cross-disciplinary nature of our field, this quality should be very attractive to applied linguists. The authors also make explicit the types of research contexts best served by the qualitative approach (e.g., p. 46) and, through their vignettes, provide the reader with clear and convincing arguments to support the use of qualitative research to answer a variety of questions. Certain vignettes are particularly illuminating, such as one describing the negotiation of entry into the research setting (a liquor store/bar in the inner city, p. 64) and one dealing with the ethical dilemmas faced by a researcher studying the subculture of drug addicts (pp. 72-73).

Marshall & Rossman also do an excellent job of bringing in the relevant literature on methodological techniques. Their discussion of reliability and validity, despite the concern for generalizability, points out the important distinctions between the qualitative and quantitative perspectives. In particular, they make the important point that qualitative research does not aspire to replicability, and they suggest ways in which qualitative researchers "can respond" to the concern that nonreplicable studies are unreliable--primarily by making the data and procedures accessible

and retrievable by others. Furthermore, they quite accurately point out that any inquiry, qualitative or quantitative, has its interpretive side: "It is a process of bringing meaning to raw, inexpressive data that is necessary whether the researcher's language is ANOVAs and means or rich description of ordinary events" (p. 114).

Designing Qualitative Research is an excellent book for applied linguists who have been working primarily in the quantitative paradigm and feel the need for a more descriptive approach to their inquiry. It does a fine job of providing qualitative research with a rationale that most quantitative researchers should be able to accept. While at times this is done at the expense of sounding overly apologetic and defensive, in the end an uncompromised picture of qualitative research is presented. The epistemological issues not as thoroughly addressed in applied linguistics literature are also given a certain amount of attention. Used with other sources, Marshall & Rossman's text would be valuable in an introduction to research design course, as a reference for writing a thesis or dissertation proposal, or as an inspiration for doing one's own research within the qualitative paradigm.

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Guidelines: A Cross-Cultural Reading/Writing Text. Ruth Spack. New York: St. Martin's, 1990. vii-338 pp.

Reviewed by
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Recent research in the fields of first and second language composition has increased our understanding of the kind of activity writing is. Hayes & Flower (1980, 1987), for example, using think-aloud protocol analysis of both skilled and unskilled writers at work, have found that first-language composing is a recursive, goal-oriented activity consisting of three major processes: planning, sentence generation, and revising, all of which occur in free variation throughout the production of a written text. Similarly, investigations of the composing behaviors of L2 writers (Jones & Tetroe, 1984; Raimes, 1987; Cumming, 1988) have paid particular attention to the interaction between writing skill and second language proficiency. While neither the relative weight of linguistic factors and writing ability nor their interaction with other variables (e.g., language background, length of residence in the L2 environment, age, and education) has been precisely determined,

one finding has clearly emerged: second language writers engage in writing processes similar to those of L1 writers.

In spite of this illuminating research, however, its findings have only just begun to make their way into second language writing classrooms where the traditional product-oriented model of composition instruction still prevails (Zamel, 1987) whose hallmark is a focus on "discrete steps and prescriptive principles that students are exhorted to follow in order to learn to write well" (Zamel, 1987, p. 701). There seem to be two reasons why practice has lagged significantly behind theory in the ESL classroom. First, ESL writing instructors view themselves primarily as language teachers and thus are preoccupied with sentence-level grammar and the reproduction of paradigms for particular types of paragraphs and essays. The second reason stems from the difficulty of capturing the complexity, recursivity, and individuality of the writing process on paper, an issue which Rose (1983) has raised. As he puts it, "Human beings simply don't internalize a complex process identically . . . [B]y their very nature, texts can perhaps present a method, but they cannot represent all the possible ways each one of us makes that method work" (Rose, 1983, p. 208)

Guidelines: *A Cross-Cultural Reading/Writing Text,* written by Ruth Spack for advanced university ESL students, is one of the first ESL composition texts which attempts to make the writing process accessible to student writers via what Rose (1983) calls "the textbook's static page." While this text does not completely overcome the limitations that Rose recognizes, it nevertheless acknowledges the complexity and recursivity of the writing process and breaks down each phase of the process into manageable strategies for pre-writing, composing, and revising.

The book consists of four sections each of which successively focuses on a more academic and less personal writing assignment: the first assignment is an essay based on personal experience; the second is a personal response to a text; the third requires the writer to construct an argument; the fourth is a research paper for which outside sources must be consulted. The topics for the second and third writing assignments are defined for the student by a number of accompanying reading selections drawn from various cultural contexts.

Each assignment is divided into activities which take the student through the entire writing process for the particular paper. The most extensive and well-grounded of these are the pre-writing activities of which there are two types. The first includes various

reading comprehension and response tasks which emphasize the central place of critical reading in academic writing, such as making entries in a reading journal before and after reading, annotation of a given passage, and conventional comprehension questions. The second type of pre-writing activity forces students to experiment with various idea-generation heuristics to help them develop content for their papers. The tasks suggested for this purpose include well-known freewriting and listing tasks, but Spack also presents a lesser-known activity called "cubing" which is a more analytical idea-generation technique that requires students to view a topic from six different perspectives.

The assignments are also accompanied by "strategies" for organizing each essay. Unlike the prescriptive, textbook-writer-produced models found in most ESL composition texts, the organizational strategies laid out by Spack offer more freedom and a greater number of options which an individual writer can suit to his or her content and purpose. The flexibility built into each lesson is balanced by the repetition of certain of these organizational techniques throughout the book. Such reinforcement of procedure can fruitfully be applied to academic writing tasks since by recycling the various organizational options for each assignment, it is likely that these patterns will become an automatic part of the student's composition repertoire. Spack's awareness of the need to develop automatic organizational skills reflects an understanding of the competence that Purves & Purves (1986) insist is essential for reducing the cognitive demand of the writing process.

Spack's text also gives prominence to revision which process studies have shown to be a central activity for all skilled writers. But global revision, which skilled writers are known to concentrate on, is not usually a focus for ESL teachers who are easily distracted by sentence-level problems when evaluating student compositions. Indeed, a concern for local revision over global revision can lead teachers to inadvertently appropriate a student's text by changing its meaning in order to achieve sentence-level accuracy (Zamel, 1985). And if teachers focus on local problems, students do too. To counteract ESL concern with local revision, Spack gives students specific instruction, in line with more current wisdom, in how to revise at the global level for content, organization, and coherence problems by making use of peer review and self-evaluation.

Peer review is introduced through a brief lesson on giving criticism, which is subsequently incorporated into a suggested peer

review form. Although the form is quite general for the first assignment, it is made more task-specific by the addition of a list of questions pertinent to each of the remaining assignments. For the companion activity of self-evaluation, Spack provides lists of questions which the student can use to self-evaluate his/her own draft from many different angles. This multi-faceted approach to reviewing one's draft is designed to help a student see where the written text fails to match his/her intentions and is in line with Witte (1985) who argues that the recognition of dissonance between the intended and received meanings is the first step to effective revision.

Beyond peer review and self-evaluation, however, the book provides directives for global revision activities such as deletion, addition, change, and rearrangement, all of which correspond to those operations which researchers have found are used by skilled writers (Matsuhashi & Gordon, 1985; Hall, 1990). However, while theoretically sound, these operations require a maturity that few student writers have, and thus they will probably prove useful only with significant mediation by the teacher.

One possible weakness of a book like *Guidelines* is the decision to center an entire academic writing course on the writing process, emphasizing drafting and the use of writing to discover meaning rather than to emulate and understand the variety of possible academic text models. Horowitz (1986a) has indicted the "process school" for failing to prepare students to meet academic writing demands. Taking the timed essay examination as an example, he points out that certain kinds of academic writing are routinized and do not require the multi-draft, exploratory techniques presented in process approach textbooks. Indeed, academic writing tasks that seem not to require the full-blown writing process have been detailed in various surveys (Bridgeman & Carlson, 1984; Horowitz, 1986b). According to these studies, such writing routines include laboratory reports, case studies, summary and analysis of assigned readings, annotated bibliography, and library research papers synthesizing multiple sources.

What Spack's book ignores, then, is the conventional and formulaic nature of many academic writing tasks. In contrast, researchers are beginning to apply text and genre analysis in an attempt to cull "teachable" rhetorical and linguistic patterns found in well known academic genres (Swales, 1984; Durst, 1987). Such research suggests that much of academic writing is as dependent on prior knowledge of appropriate discourse modes as on writing skill (Purves & Purves, 1986). Unfortunately, the latter seems to be the

sole focus of the process approach, and thus Spack's book does not really address the needs of ESL writers who have had little experience with English discourse modes and actual academic writing practice. While *Guidelines* does provide students with the opportunity to work through assignments that somewhat mirror academic writing tasks, it does not give them the tools to analyze the linguistic and rhetorical features found in academic writing.

In addition to its lack of attention to rhetorical and linguistic patterns found in academic genres, *Guidelines* fails to engage students in reading and writing truly academic discourse. Two of the four writing assignments require the writer to draw on personal experience, a form of content development and interpretation rarely demanded in courses across the tertiary curriculum. And, while the text acknowledges the link between critical reading and academic writing by attaching each writing task to related reading selections, these are largely of the essay or journalistic genre and do not represent the range of academic text types that students actually read and synthesize into their writing. Selections from academic textbooks, data-based research reports, and argumentative essays based on empirical studies are noticeably absent from this text.

These drawbacks notwithstanding, *Guidelines* is the most progressive addition to the collection of ESL composition texts currently on the market. Teachers committed to implementing the latest research findings on the process approach to writing will feel comfortable with its fundamental precepts. However, they will also have to recognize that *Guidelines*, like all current composition textbooks, needs to be adapted for use in an instructional program geared to addressing students' academic writing needs by synthesizing the best of the process approach with the growing body of composition research in text and genre analysis.

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Newbury House TOEFL Preparation Kit: Preparing for the TOEFL by Daniel B. Kennedy, Dorry Mann Kenyon, and Steven J. Matthiesen. New York: Newbury House, 1989. 262 pp.

Newbury House TOEFL Preparation Kit: Preparing for the Test of Written English by Liz Hamp-Lyons. New York: Newbury House, 1989. 134 pp.

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Recent research on the Educational Testing Service's Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) suggests that, while the TOEFL is a valid test of language proficiency, it tests only a limited range of communication skills and ignores many skills required by students in American university settings (Duran et al., 1985). There is also no clear evidence of any relationship between high TOEFL scores and academic achievement (Graham, 1987). Such findings raise questions about the appropriacy of using TOEFL preparation books in courses for university-bound ESL students, especially given the current orientation in academic-purpose language teaching to promote communicative competence rather than the sort of discrete language knowledge which is tested in many sections of the TOEFL. Indeed, conscientious teachers may wonder whether they are doing their students a disservice by spending class time on exercises specifically designed to raise TOEFL scores, at the expense of activities which promote the general academic skills needed at the university. At the same time, those language testing researchers concerned with the TOEFL's limitations might ask whether TOEFL preparation books do more harm than good since they perpetuate the status quo rather than encourage improvement of the TOEFL along the lines that some experts have suggested (Savignon, 1986; Larsen-Freeman, 1986) so as to increase its ability to measure communicative skills.

The *Newbury House TOEFL Preparation Kit* is by no means radical in its attitude towards the TOEFL, but it does attempt to provide a partial answer to the first of these dilemmas. While the authors take a pragmatic approach toward the discrete-point sections of the TOEFL, they also emphasize those areas of the TOEFL which

are more relevant to the future needs of university students. The result is a well-written, easy to read manual that provides practical suggestions for doing well on the discrete-point grammar, listening, and vocabulary items of the TOEFL. Additionally, the Kit promotes the acquisition of academic skills, especially in reading and writing, to help students deal with the TOEFL as it exists today and with the academic requirements of the American universities they hope to attend.

The Kit contains two volumes--*Preparing for the TOEFL* (*PFT*) and *Preparing for the Test of Written English* (*PTWE*)--as well as two audio cassettes which simulate the listening sections of the practice tests, and a separate tapescript and answer key, all neatly packaged together in a plastic binder. *PFT* has many features typical of TOEFL preparation books now on the market: answers to commonly asked questions about the TOEFL, descriptions of the various parts of the test, sample exercises for each section, and practice tests. However, a few crucial differences make the Newbury House Kit notable. First is the authors' attention to the strict specifications of item types and formats which TOEFL item writers follow. The authors have clearly spent considerable time studying numerous forms of the TOEFL and, in essence, have recreated the test specifications so as to characterize the kinds of questions found on the TOEFL in terms of content, format, and difficulty. The result is that they are able to give detailed information for each test section about the language skill being tested (e.g., listening for specific information, making inferences), about the question formats, and about the strategies needed to answer a given question type.

In discussing these strategies, the authors implicitly distinguish between those sections which test discrete language items and those which test integrated skills. The practical and concrete suggestions for dealing with the former are meant to help students perform as well as possible whatever their level of language proficiency. These hints are not unlike those found in other TOEFL books (e.g., King & Stanley, 1983; Pyle & Muñoz, 1986); however, being based on empirical study of several thousand TOEFL items rather than on mere intuition gives them more credibility and accuracy. One example comes from the answer strategies for the vocabulary section. Pyle & Muñoz's advice to students to read the entire sentence in which a vocabulary item occurs is the advice most ESL teachers would give for dealing with unfamiliar words. However, as *PFT* points out, since vocabulary items on the TOEFL

are specifically designed so that any of the four alternatives would fit logically into the test sentence, the context is of little or no use in determining the meaning of the word. Students are therefore advised to save time by reading only the underlined vocabulary item and the four alternative answers, rather than trying to understand the sentence in which the item is embedded. Strategies such as this, based on an accurate description of TOEFL items, are found throughout all the chapters on the less communicatively oriented sections of the TOEFL and are intended more to provide students with test-wiseness than to improve their command of the language.

A different approach is taken towards the TOEFL reading comprehension section in *PFT*. Usually given short shrift in TOEFL manuals such as Jenkins-Murphy (1981) and Sharpe (1986), this section deservedly receives a great deal of attention in *PFT*. The authors recognize that, of all the tasks on the TOEFL, the reading comprehension section most closely approximates a real-world language task that students will face at American universities (Duran et al., 1985). Thus, instead of merely providing test-taking strategies, as in other sections, the authors stress the importance of becoming an active reader: one who interacts with the written text by asking questions, by relating the ideas in the text to one's own experience, and by forming opinions about the ideas as one reads. Students are taken through these active reading strategies step by step before being introduced to the actual question types found in this section of the TOEFL. Unlike many of the other chapters, therefore, this chapter provides students with useful advice which they can benefit from for other academic tasks besides the TOEFL.

Another difference between *PFT* and other TOEFL preparation books is apparent in the sample tests. Although the Kit has fewer tests than are found in books such as Pyle & Muñoz (1986) or Sharpe (1986), the tests are written with the same careful attention to TOEFL specifications as are the practice exercises, right down to the instructions and sample questions, which are identical to those on the actual test. An especially useful feature of the *PFT* practice TOEFL tests is that they come with score conversion tables. A student can thus quite accurately calculate his or her actual TOEFL scores since the tables are based on correlations between scores obtained by people who have taken both the practice tests and actual TOEFL tests. The practice tests can thus enable students and teachers using this book to gauge probable performance on actual TOEFL tests.

Despite these advantages over other TOEFL books, however, the same strict attention that *PTW* pays to characteristics of actual forms of the TOEFL can be seen as the book's main flaw, not only as its strength. Students expecting a thorough grammar review such as is typically found in other TOEFL books may be disappointed by the practice exercises in the rather lengthy chapter devoted to the Structure and Written Expression portions of the TOEFL. The authors' meticulous efforts to categorize and describe items from this section, including such questionably relevant details as how many questions deal with Canadian topics on a typical test form, might be quite valuable for students unfamiliar with the TOEFL. However, the authors have little to say about how to answer these questions apart from the vague exhortation to "choose the [noun, verb, conjunction, and so on] that has the correct meaning" (e.g., p. 126). Given the authors' concern elsewhere in the text for promoting academic skills, it is a bit disappointing that they could not think of a more useful way to approach this section. Still, in all fairness, the authors' purpose in this chapter is not to improve test-takers' command of English grammar, but rather to sensitize them to the kinds of questions found in this section of the test.

A more fundamental question regarding this chapter is why the grammar portion of the TOEFL is singled out for extra attention. One suspects this was done to please readers whose experience has led them to equate language learning with grammar instruction and test preparation with grammar review. Although one can hardly blame the authors for catering to this large market of potential buyers, the question again arises as to whether an emphasis on a discrete-point section of the TOEFL, typical though this may be of most TOEFL preparation books, will ultimately serve learners poorly by inhibiting rather than promoting worthwhile changes in the TOEFL.

The second volume in the Kit, *Preparing for the Test of Written English (PTWE)*, manages to avoid these controversies. While close attention in this book has also been paid to the actual tasks demanded by the TOEFL--in this case, the Test of Written English (TWE)--more emphasis has been placed on current notions regarding the process of writing. Indeed, *PTWE*, written as a self-study guide, could easily be used in a writing class as well. The book is divided into five parts, the first of which is a short introduction to the TWE. Part 2, "Skills for Success on Academic Writing Tests," takes the student systematically through the process of writing, from a brief discussion of the features of academic writing, through the presentation of pre-writing techniques (e.g.,

analyzing the writing prompt and brainstorming for idea generation) and selection and organization of ideas, to inspection of one's own work for clarity and accuracy. Throughout this chapter, not only are writing prompts similar in topic and structure to those found on the actual TWE, but sample student essays are included which illustrate more successful and less successful responses to these prompts. Students are also given several useful pre-writing and writing assignments which are then exploited in later tasks in the book.

The next two chapters of *PTWE* discuss in greater detail the two main types of writing prompts found in the TWE and provide several prompts that students can use to practice writing their own responses. An interesting feature of these sections is that students are often asked to rewrite the essays that they attempted earlier on, thus reinforcing the current notion that even the best writers can improve their writing by revising and rewriting their earlier work.

Perhaps the most interesting and innovative section of *PTWE*, however, is Part 5, "Self-Scoring Practice," for in this section the actual TWE scoring guide is reproduced and discussed in detail. Students are then guided through the scoring process and given several sample essays to rate. By viewing writing samples from a rater's point of view, students can develop their own internal criteria for essay evaluation, which in turn should help them improve their own writing.

Another kind of consciousness-raising suggestion is the author's frequent advice that students obtain feedback on their essays by showing their writing to other people as often as possible. However, even students who are unable or unwilling to share their writing, but who have the initiative and perseverance to work through *PTWE* on their own, can learn a great deal about academic writing from the book. Yet, to some degree, it is a shame that so many valuable hints for improving essay writing and techniques are hidden away in a TOEFL preparation book. Given the work that has obviously gone into the volume, the suggestions and sample essays could usefully serve any ESL teacher or student interested in improving academic writing skills.

In sum, the *Newbury House TOEFL Preparation Kit* is a valuable new entry in the field of test preparation. Though many might argue that TOEFL books are more destructive than beneficial to ESL students because they tend to endorse and perpetuate questionable testing formats, Newbury House has at least taken a step in the right direction. The authors of the Kit have approached the TOEFL not as the last word in language testing but as a set of

highly specified tasks which can be more easily managed once they are understood, and they have combined this pragmatic attitude with help and sound advice for the real work of academic-purpose language learning and use. Used with discretion, the Kit will no doubt be appreciated by English learners before as well as beyond the TOEFL.

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The Foreign Teaching Assistant's Manual by Patricia Byrd, Janet C. Constantinides, and Martha C. Pennington. New York: Collier Macmillan, 1989. 193 pp.

Teaching Matters: Skills and Strategies for International Teaching Assistants by Teresa Pica, Gregory A. Barnes, and Alexis G. Finger. New York: Newbury House, 1990. 192 pp.

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With the remarkable growth in the number of international teaching assistants (ITAs) on U.S. campuses in recent years, most major research universities--indeed most universities with teaching assistants--have had to deal with the often difficult process of effectively incorporating international graduate students into the teaching assistant ranks, what Bailey (1984) has characterized as "the foreign TA problem." The fields of engineering and mathematics, as well as the biological and physical sciences, have been especially affected by the substantial increase in the number of ITAs hired to assist with undergraduate courses.

In response to this situation, most institutions have created special training programs for ITAs, which resemble ESP courses for teachers, the results of which have been shared in national conferences and published articles. More recently, two books have appeared which address the training of ITAs: *The Foreign Teaching Assistant's Manual*, by Patrice Byrd, Janet C. Constantinides, and Martha C. Pennington, and *Teaching Matters: Skills and Strategies for International Teaching Assistants*, by Teresa Pica, Gregory A. Barnes, and Alexis G. Finger.

Teaching assistants at American universities perform a variety of roles. While most TAs grade exams, prepare materials, and hold office hours, many of them also run labs and lead discussion sections. Their status as graduate students helps them to bridge the gap between professor and student. Since clearly all of this is true for international TAs as well, what are the special hurdles ITAs face as new participants in the university instructional process?

The primary concerns of the ITA involve three broad areas: language, culture, and pedagogy. Although there is obviously a

good deal of overlap among these areas, we shall discuss each separately by referring to pertinent literature and then reviewing each book in that particular light.

Shaw & Garate (1984) define an ITA's *language* skills as the ability to express meaning based on his or her knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, but they also point out that communicative skills depend on discourse competence which involves the ability to perform such functions as initiating a lesson, defining a concept, or giving instructions. A study by Romstedt & Moon (1985) revealed that ITAs often have difficulty executing certain communicative functions, e.g., responding to complaints, clarifying misunderstandings, and eliciting feedback. In their study of the role of lab assistants, Plakans & Myers (1989) recommended that linguistic instruction in ITA programs should center on interactional skills, in particular on the comprehension of informal speech and the ability to pose effective questions.

The orientation to language skills in *The Foreign Teaching Assistant's Manual* (henceforth, the *FTA Manual*) "presupposes an advanced level of English" (p. ix). As a result, the book deals neither with grammar nor vocabulary, but focuses almost exclusively on pronunciation instruction, including a review of vowels and consonants, stress and intonation patterns, and rules for pausing and blending between words. Such a focus belies an assumption that a fuller knowledge of English pronunciation will aid in the comprehension of informal speech, one of the skills recommended by Plakans & Myers (1989). Although a brief discussion of delivery (e.g., eye contact and gestures) begins the section on pronunciation, the authors clearly expect that ITAs will receive most of their instruction and feedback on discourse competence and interactional skills when performing the teaching tasks later on in the book. And indeed, the broader communication skills contextualized in the "Practice for Teaching" section of the *FTA Manual* reflect the overlap between language and pedagogy.

Language skills are not directly addressed in *Teaching Matters: Skills and Strategies for International Teaching Assistants* (henceforth, *Matters*). The authors either assume adequate English proficiency or expect it to be treated in a separate course. The book thus deals with communicative ability primarily as it relates to actual teaching. In the introductory section, "Notes to the Teachers," the authors clearly state: "We take for granted that you will engage in considerable videotaping and replay" (p. viii). In line with Shaw & Garate (1984), who point out that ITA communicative competence

involves being able to perform typical teaching functions, this book closely intertwines improvement in language and communication skills with pedagogical training. As an additional language resource, a list of current pronunciation instructional texts is included in an appendix.

The second aspect in ITA training concerns knowledge of *culture*--in this case, familiarity with the culture of the American classroom in general, as well as, more specifically, of the ITA's own university and department. A lack of such cultural information could lead to a considerable mismatch between ITA and student expectations (Pialorsi, 1984) and result in various misunderstandings, such as what is considered appropriate student behavior in class, what level of preparation students bring to the subject matter, and how formal or informal the relationship between TAs and undergraduates should be.

The *FTA Manual* devotes its first four chapters to culture, beginning with a cross-cultural comparison of education, university life, faculty, and students. Chapter 2 offers hands-on activities and worksheets to help ITAs familiarize themselves with their specific department, whereas the final two chapters in Section I provide descriptions of American students and faculty. The *FTA Manual* thus covers all aspects of American classroom culture, focusing both on what specific departments and undergraduates might expect of ITAs as instructors and on what ITAs can expect of their American students.

In *Matters*, cultural background information is provided in a single chapter highlighting the American university system. Useful chapter appendices include a list of common American first names with their corresponding nicknames and a list of the abbreviated names for most academic disciplines. Compared to the *FTA Manual*, *Matters* provides a basic general knowledge of academic culture but does not include as extensive a treatment of American faculty and student expectations, nor does it place as much emphasis on getting to know one's own department.

It should be noted that the linguistic and cultural hurdles facing ITAs are not unlike those experienced by second language international students in general. However, in their roles as university instructors to mainly native-speaker students, ITAs appear to require contextualized linguistic and cultural input going well beyond that needed by the average foreign student completing a degree. The books under review have certainly attempted to

respond to this requirement, especially with regard to cultural knowledge.

Thirdly, the need for skillful *pedagogy*, while not unique to ITAs, is especially crucial given the possibility that ITAs may have linguistic and cultural difficulties. The sorts of necessary skills ITAs need include classroom management, lesson planning, using the blackboard, and checking for comprehension. In some respects this area might be viewed as a cultural variable and not merely a pedagogical one. Furthermore, just as teaching styles may vary from country to country, methodological preferences may vary across disciplines or even departments. Plakans & Myers (1989) thus strongly recommend that ITAs familiarize themselves with their particular American teaching context, especially through contacts with experienced ITAs in their department.

Pedagogy is approached by the *FTA Manual* from several perspectives. In addition to providing extensive general cultural background on the typical teaching context of ITAs, the book devotes three sections to practical pedagogical matters: "Background to Teaching" (e.g., planning a course, using audiovisual aids, and preparing tests), "Practice for Teaching" (actual mini-teaching assignments), and "Observation of Teaching Behaviors" (worksheets with guidelines for observing classes). The result is that ITAs have ample opportunity to prepare for, observe, and practice in the target teaching context, especially if instructors and students take advantage of the cross-referencing of relevant materials suggested by the authors (in a somewhat confusing appendix) to make the most of the book's modular organization.

Matters, which describes itself as a "process-oriented textbook" (p. vii), devotes nine of its ten chapters to teaching, covering a wide spectrum not only of pedagogical settings, such as the classroom and the office hour, but of instructional skills as well, such as presenting information, employing effective questioning strategies, testing and grading. In line with the sequence of a typical teacher training course, the authors have placed classroom teaching skills, such as presenting information, using effective questioning strategies, and office hour interaction, in early chapters, while more global preparatory topics, such as planning a course and meeting a class, are postponed until later. *Matters* also includes a glossary of classroom-related terms and a list of research and pedagogical references. Cited throughout the book, the research references are a major strength of this text, providing sound theoretical support to the practical pedagogical functions and strategies that are addressed.

Some of these pedagogical skills are treated more extensively in one text than the other. The *FTA Manual*, for example, dedicates 5 chapters (Chapter 21-25) to different types of classroom observation activities, such as observing the setting, the instructor and the students, whereas *Matters* only mentions observations briefly in Chapter 10. On the other hand, *Matters* covers three topics more in depth than the *FTA Manual*: dealing with classroom questions and answers--both the TA's and the students'--(Chapter 3); working one-on-one and giving individualized instruction during the office hour (Chapter 4); and preparing the course syllabus, supported by a set of guidelines and a model outline (Chapter 5).

The two books may also be compared with relation to format. Specifically, each book structures its chapters in quite different ways, reflecting different overall styles. Whereas the *FTA Manual* consists primarily of worksheets to be used within the framework of a well-guided course of instruction, *Matters* could, because of the amount of background information it provides, be used not only as a classroom text but also as a reference for the individual student.

In the *FTA Manual,* each chapter, after a brief overview outlining its content, is divided into a number of subsections all of which are listed in the book's table of contents. The first two chapters, "Background to U.S. Education" and "Departmental Relations," begin each of their subsections with a **background assignment**, a type of pre-activity which either elicits the ITA's own background knowledge or encourages the ITA to investigate the department he or she will be teaching in. This is followed by a **discussion assignment** which provides opportunity for ITAs to share their results in a group. Beginning with Chapter 3, each subsection begins with a written passage (as short as one paragraph or as long as three pages) containing general information on the new topic. Following the passage, some **assignment** (i.e., a specific practical exercise) is set so that the ITA can digest and immediately apply the new information before moving on. Sample assignments include finding resources on one's campus, consulting with experienced ITAs about one's TA assignment, analyzing discourse from one's field, and performing mini-teaching lessons.

In contrast, *Matters* structures its chapters in a more traditional way. Each chapter begins with a list of bold-faced key terms which are also explained in a glossary at the back of the book. Chapter introductions are brief, giving an overview of the chapter content as well as listing specific objectives. As in the *FTA Manual*,

each chapter is divided into clear subsections all of which are listed in the book's table of contents. However, even more than the *FTA Manual*, *Matters* provides many examples of authentic materials, such as a syllabus, a lesson plan, and a standardized course evaluation form. In addition, rather than embedding the activities throughout the chapters, as the *FTA Manual* does, *Matters* ends each chapter with **Comprehension Questions** (to check basic understanding of the text), **Discussion Questions** (to extend basic understanding), for example, "Are there ways to check your students' comprehension without asking a question?" (p. 47), and **Activities** (to apply the skills and strategies presented in the chapter) such as role-plays or classroom observations. It should be noted, however, that relevant exercises are suggested at the end of each subsection, and thus instructors or students can deal with the information more actively during the reading of the text itself.

In sum, these two books offer the instructor and/or planner of an ITA training program a variety of resources. The design and, to a certain extent, the purpose of the two texts are different. The *FTA Manual* offers brief but focused coverage, in a modular format, of many of the specific topics for which ITAs need guidance to prepare themselves as thoroughly as possible for their own setting and teaching assignment. *Matters*, on the other hand, provides greater in-depth treatment of fewer topics in a sequentially chronological manner. Whereas both books deal extensively with pedagogical issues, the *FTA Manual* not only more strongly emphasizes the possible cultural adaptation an ITA may need to make in the classroom, it also includes a section on pronunciation matters.

Both textbooks could be used in ITA training courses to great advantage, although the *FTA Manual*, because of its hands-on nature, would probably require stronger guidance from a course and instructor than *Matters,* which could also serve as a reference or self-study text at institutions where ITA training programs are brief. Either text could be used over a quarter or semester; the *FTA Manual*, in fact, contains enough activities and assignments for a year's worth of teaching preparation. But even universities restricted to intensive summer programs or shorter ITA orientations could greatly benefit from the thoughtful information and useful activities in these two texts.

It should be noted that both books assume that trainees will have access to videotaping of their practice teaching, although lack of this resource would not preclude the use of either text. That

videotaped mini-lessons form the core of most current ITA training programs greatly influences the approach each of these books takes. However, one core feature of many ITA programs, which cannot be addressed in book format alone (and which is not addressed by either text), is the analysis and discussion of videotapes of experienced TAs in the various disciplines. This resource provides ITAs with an extremely helpful intermediate step between reading about teaching skills and doing it oneself.

As a final note, we wish to emphasize that a great deal of information in both books focuses on pedagogical skills which, as we stated earlier, are as essential (and often as lacking) in native-speaking TAs as in international TAs. It is hoped, therefore, that the useful applicability of these two texts will extend into the native-speaking TA arena as well.

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Issues in Applied Linguistics

sadly notes the untimely passing of

Cathy Watson

Secretary of the ESL Service Courses at UCLA

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Errata

In Volume 1, Number 1 of *Issues in Applied Linguistics* (June, 1990):

1. The name of **Roann Altman** was inadvertently left off the list of Charter Subscribers on page (iii).

2. The prototypical argument structure of the verb PUT was displayed incorrectly on page 78 and page 84 of Yasuhiro Shirai's article, "Putting PUT to Use: Prototype and Metaphorical Extension" (pp. 78-97). The correct display should show the features [+small] and [+alienable] under the Object, not the Locative, as follows:

Subject	PUT	Object	Locative
[+human]	PTRANS	[+solid]	[+horizontal surface]
		[+small]	
		[+alienable]	

The Editors apologize for these oversights.

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